

Japan as an Emerging Multicultural Society

Exploring Contemporary Minority Issues Through the Case of Muslim Immigrants

Eskil O. Vestre



Master's Thesis (60 credits), East Asian Studies

Spring semester 2011

Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages

Faculty of Humanities

THE UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

May 18th, 2011

Japan as an Emerging Multicultural Society

Exploring Contemporary Minority Issues Through the Case of Muslim Immigrants

Master's thesis, Eskil O. Vestre

© Eskil Olaf Vestre

2011

Japan as an Emerging Multicultural Society: Exploring Contemporary Minority Issues Through the Case of Muslim Immigrants

Eskil O. Vestre

<http://www.duo.uio.no/>

Printed by: Reprosentralen, University of Oslo

Summary

Contemporary Japan, with its low birth rate and high life expectancy, is an aging society. Furthermore, the country's population is set to rapidly decrease in the coming decades. For demographic reasons such as these, it is likely that Japan's immigration of foreign workers will increase in the near future. Concerns have been voiced about the potential challenging consequences of a shift towards greater cultural diversity for a society with limited experience in the matter. While the presence of distinct minority groups is nothing new in Japan, the country does have relatively limited experience with foreign minorities (who currently constitute less than 2 percent of the total population), and especially with tangibly different foreigners with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture.

This thesis attempts to shed light on the current situation of Japan's tangibly different immigrants, as well as the difficulties and challenges they are experiencing, by exploring the case of Muslim immigrants. The findings pinpoint a number of specific policy changes that the Japanese government could undertake in order to potentially help improve the current situation of foreign minorities, as well as prepare the country for a future increase in immigrants.

Underlying reasons for the status quo of Japan's Muslim immigrants and immigration policies are explained in light of contemporary and historical discourses on the nation and 'Others'. In-depth quality analyses of these discourses are conducted using the discourse-historical approach to discourse analysis, and the results illuminate potential obstacles to the development of future-oriented immigration policies in Japan. Other findings include discoveries of historically rooted differences between Western European nations and Japan as hosts societies for Muslim immigrants. This suggests that for the future development of multiculturalism- and minority-oriented policies in East Asian nations, a context-sensitive approach might be desirable, rather than merely learning from Europe's experience.

Acknowledgements

The initial ideas that eventually evolved into this thesis first came to my mind back in the spring semester of 2008, while I was studying at Kwansei Gakuin University in Japan. For almost three years, I have been reading an immense amount of quality research related to my topic, and I stand in great debt to the various scholars who made it possible for me to write this thesis. Besides displaying gratitude to people who I am yet to meet personally, I would also like to express my appreciation to all the people around me who were truly indispensable during the writing process.

I would like to thank my academic supervisor Professor Vladimir Tikhonov for his reliability and helpfulness, for always responding quickly to all questions, and for the enthusiastic and inspirational manner in which he shared his extensive and deep knowledge of East Asia with me. I would also like to thank Ms. Hildur Guðrún Ágústsdóttir for always being there for me in this challenging final year of my studies, and for always displaying nothing but kindness, support and patience for me, even during the crucial periods when this thesis demanded my full and complete attention and concentration day and night, every day of the week. Hildur kept me sane.

Next, I would like to thank Mrs. Ekaterina Pliassova for all her support and advice to my thesis, and for taking her time to read through it multiple times while she herself was immensely busy writing her own thesis. Ekaterina has been studying together with me in the same study program for almost six years, in Norway as well as Japan. It has always been interesting and inspirational to discuss Japan with a friend and fellow student with similar experiences and perspectives.

A warm thank-you also goes out my proofreaders from the UK and North America, for reading through certain sections of my thesis to check English spelling and grammar. Mr. Faisal Khan, Mr. Ryan Vergel and Mr. Evan Hadfield: You have proven to me that TE, TR and Kangaku friends are the kind of friends one can count on for life. Finally, I would like to thank the following people for providing helpful and illuminating answers when I had questions about Japan: Mr. Daisuke Kosugi, Ms. Naomi Yabe Magnussen, Professor Mark Teuween, and Professor Dick Stegewerns. I must specifically thank Professor Stegewerns for his positive feedback on my oral presentation about immigration in Japan that I held at the University of Oslo in the spring semester of 2009. His feedback encouraged me to not only expand the presentation into a 10-page semester essay, but eventually also to a 100-page master's thesis.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	10
1.1 Introduction to topic	10
1.2 Research hypothesis and question	12
1.3 Relevance of study and motivation	13
1.4 Theory and definitions of central concepts	16
1.5 Methodology	22
1.6 Language transcription and character usage	24
2. Immigration and foreign residents in Japan	25
2.1 Greying of society: kōreika and shōshika	25
2.2 Immigration and foreign minorities in post-war Japan	28
2.3 An overview of Japan's contemporary foreign residents	36
3. Situation of Muslims in Japan today	40
3.1 An overview of Japan's current foreign Muslim population	40
3.2 Current trends in Japan's Muslim population	45
3.3 Problems for foreign Muslim workers	47
3.4 Acculturation issues	49
3.5 The emerging underclass and need for changes in the educational system	57
3.6 Muslim concern: Unbalanced image and prejudice	61
4. History of Japanese images of Muslims	63
4.1 Prior to the 20th century	63
4.2 Early 20th century	66
4.3 1930s	69
4.4 1940s	70

5. Contemporary Japanese Images of Muslims	71
5.1 Image of Muslims I - ‘Outsiders’ in the ‘homogeneous’ nation of Japan	72
5.2 Image of Muslims II - ‘Illegals’	79
5.3 Image of Muslims III - ‘Terrorist’ image?	80
5.4 Image of Muslims IV - ‘Backwards’ / ‘uncivilized’	82
5.5 Image of Muslims V - Bearded man rather than man of faith	83
5.6 Image of Muslims VI - the entertainingly different curiosity on TV	87
6. Multiculturalism	95
6.1 Towards multiculturalism	95
6.2 Japan’s mixture of cultures	96
6.3 Multiculturalism and rights in an East Asian nation	97
7. Conclusions	99
7.1 Increased immigration, from an increasing number of countries	99
7.2 Japan’s foreign Muslims today	100
7.3 Japan’s Muslim foreign minority compared to other foreign minorities in Japan, as well as Muslim minorities in Europe	101
7.4 Problems foreign Muslims are experiencing in Japan today	103
7.5 Possible reasons for the problems foreign Muslims are experiencing in Japan today	105
7.6 Suggested policy changes for better accommodation of immigrants in Japan	107
8. Bibliography	112

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to topic

When I first visited Japan as a tourist in the spring of 2005, one aspect of the country that immediately fascinated me was *how much everyone looked alike*. Walking through the crowded streets of Tokyo, absolutely everyone around me appeared to have the same black hair and the ‘typical Japanese looks’ the way I imagined them to be at the time. While this impression did correspond with the common Western image of Japan that I had grown up with, having the chance to personally observe the composition of people in the streets of Japan left an unexpectedly strong impression on me. The Japanese population’s apparent homogeneity in appearances stroke me as unusual when compared to my two home countries of Norway and Germany,¹ and I started wondering why ethnic minorities seemed to be almost completely out of the picture in Japan.

Little did I know back then that the majority of Japan’s ethnic minority citizens were in fact *intangible* foreigners, being either members of ethnic minority groups local to Japan - such as the *burakumin*, Japan’s former lower caste, or *ainu* and *ryukyu*, the indigenous people of Japan’s northern and southern frontiers, respectively - or foreign nationals born in, or with origins from, Asian neighbor countries such as China and (North or South) Korea. These minority groups all sported the looks that I at the time assumed to be ‘typical Japanese looks’.

When I lived in Japan as a temporary citizen in the fall of 2006, studying Japanese, I became a tangibly different foreign resident myself. During this and additional future long-term stays, I not only learnt about the aforementioned intangible minority groups, but I also started to notice that Japan did indeed have a great variety of immigrants with physical characteristics notably different from that of the majority. Furthermore, I experienced that living as a white European in Japan, one apparently always will be assumed to be a short-term tourist, simply because that indeed is what the majority of white foreigners Japanese encounter are. I would always be met with surprise when people learned that I lived in Japan and spoke the Japanese language.

I always suspected the situation would have to be rather different for those foreigners who neither resemble East Asians nor Westerners in their looks, and my curiosity about this type of foreigners gradually increased. Whenever one of them featured in a Japanese TV show speaking Japanese, the mere novelty of the scene deeply fascinated me. Whenever I saw one walking down

¹ My father being Norwegian and my mother German, I grew up in both countries. Also holding dual nationality, I consider both to be my ‘native’ countries.

the streets of Kobe, or was served by one at a foreign cuisine restaurant in Osaka, I always wondered what the person's story was. I wondered what it could be like to permanently live and work in Japan as an 'obvious' foreigner. For the past three years, I have read an extensive amount of books, articles, statistics, websites and other sources describing and explaining the situation of foreigners in Japan. While I still feel that I am only scratching the surface of this wide topic, I have through my strong personal interest developed an increasing understanding of the topic, which has allowed me to write this thesis.

Large-scale immigration of unskilled labor from countries outside East Asia did not occur in Japan until the 1980s. Until that point, the country's only significant foreign minority had been the *zainichi*. Using Apichai Shipper's (2008) definition, *zainichi* are "Japan-born foreigners", mainly Koreans (but also some Chinese) who have lived in Japan for several generations without having become naturalized.²

During what I choose to call Japan's 'First Wave' of immigration influx, which took place in the 1980s and 1990s, during the peak of Japan's post-war economic expansion, a period commonly referred to as Japan's 'bubble economy' period, guest workers from various countries dubbed 'trainees', as well as foreigners of Japanese descent mainly from South America dubbed *nikkeijin*, entered Japan to do blue collar work in the country's flourishing industry. Using Shipper's definition, *nikkeijin* are "second and third generation 'Japanese' who were born and raised abroad", mainly Brazilians (but also some Peruvians).³ These two parallel inflows of foreign workers proved indispensable to the Japanese economy, as the country was suffering from significant labor shortage at the time, especially in certain blue collar positions. Yet, the government, whose official policy was (and still is) that Japan should only grant visas to skilled workers, never officially admitted to either of these two flows of foreigners being cases of 'unskilled labor immigration'.

In fact, only the *nikkeijin* were ever even officially considered to be immigrants, as the so-called 'trainees' were only considered to be contemporary participating observers of Japanese industries - despite their hard work and limited 'training'. The inflow of these two types of 'legal' immigrants also coincided with large-scale immigration of 'illegal' immigrants, who easily found work in companies struggling to recruit unskilled labor. These three types of immigrants have since settled down in the country, but increasingly restrictive immigration policies combined with the burst of the bubble economy and a prolonged period of economic downturn has in recent years

² Apichai W. Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners* (Cornell University Press, 2008), 29.

³ Ibid., 37.

severely limited the immigrant inflow into Japan. While a number of foreigners still enter the country every year, the immigration atmosphere of the First Wave is yet to find its match.

It appears this will not be the last major wave of immigration, however: For reasons I will elaborate on in Chapter 2, I believe we are likely to see a Second Wave of immigration influx within the next few decades. This time around, the reasons for the foreigners' entry is likely to be different: Rather than solving problems of labor shortage caused by a flourishing economy, the next wave of immigrants are needed to solve labor shortage problems related to Japan's current demographic issues, which are causing the size of the working age population to rapidly sink to drastic lows.

Contemporary Japan is arguably in great need of increased immigration. The country is unlikely to be able to continue officially supporting nothing but immigration of foreigners 'close to themselves', such as the *nikkeijin*. The official introduction of completely new kinds of foreigners as new citizens in Japan may by now only be a matter of time. These new immigrants are likely to come from an increasingly diverse number of countries. But is Japan prepared for these new immigrants? How well does the country manage to include **tangibly different** immigrants, with **cultures far removed** from Japanese mainstream culture, into society?

1.2 Research hypothesis and question

Hypothesis: Japan will soon turn to official government-supported unskilled labor migration, initiating a new wave of immigration. These new immigrants will come from a diverse number of countries.

If this hypothesis should prove to be correct, the country's population of tangibly different immigrants with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture is likely to experience a significant growth.

Main research question:

If we look at the situation of Japan's current tangibly different immigrants, and the difficulties and challenges they are experiencing, through the case of Muslim immigrants, what observations can be made that could potentially help improve their current situation, as well as prepare Japan for a future increase in immigrants? What possible underlying reasons for these difficulties and challenges can be found?

Among the different groups of tangibly different immigrants with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture, I have chosen Muslim immigrants as the group that I will look closer at. Reasons for my choice will be explained in section 1.3.

Support research questions:

To add a comparative perspective: In what way does the situation of the Muslim foreign minority in Japan differ from that of other minorities in Japan, and from that of Muslim foreign minorities in Western Europe? Also, what specific policy changes can be suggested for better accommodation of immigrant minorities in Japan?

1.3 Relevance of study and motivation

I believe that research on Japan's ongoing shift into a society of greater cultural pluralism, and the implications of a larger immigrant population in Japan, is of major relevance today. The number of foreigners in Japan is expected to increase significantly in the coming decades, due to Japan's demographic problems of low birth rate and high life expectancy. These reasons will be elaborated further in Chapter 2. My thesis attempts to shed light on how tangibly different immigrants with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture have been introduced to Japan so far, and also gives us an idea on how they should be included into society the future.

There already exists an extensive amount of quality in-depth research on older minority and immigrant groups (see for example research by Sonya Ryang, Tessa Morris-Suzuki and Yasunori Fukuoka), but the existing research doesn't sufficiently cover newer minority groups, especially those that are tangibly different immigrants, and whose cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture. Furthermore, it has not given enough attention to 'newcomer' groups of foreigners, e.g. labor migrants who arrived in Japan in the last three decades. Research on immigrant minorities typically rather focuses on minorities such as the *zainichi*, who are an 'oldcomer' foreigner minority with a hundred-year long history in Japan, and whose country of origin is a close neighbour to Japan, meaning they both culturally and appearance-wise blend into Japanese society quite easily. Similarly, research on 'newcomer' foreigners typically focuses on *nikkeijin*, who might be from South America, but nonetheless are of Japanese descent.

In order to fill what I perceive as a gap in the existing scholarship on Japan, I would like to look at the current situation of the country's Muslims immigrant population. It is therefore my hope that my thesis could become a valuable contribution to research on contemporary Japanese society,

as research on ‘newcomer’ immigrants that are tangibly different immigrants, with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture, does not sufficiently exist yet. In addition, my thesis will hopefully be of value to the research field of Muslims as an immigrant minority.

Muslims have become central to scholarly and popular debate on multiculturalism in Western Europe, but the same cannot be said about the United States, where the number of Muslim immigrants remains relatively small, and the main cultural ‘others’ are Latino immigrants⁴. Similarly, one may not only argue that the size of Japan’s Muslim immigrant population, not likely to count much more than 60 000⁵ persons - a low number compared to the 680,518⁶ Chinese and 578,495⁷ Korean nationals residing in Japan⁸ - could be the explanation for the relatively limited debate on Muslims immigrants in Japan, but also that the quite limited presence of tangibly different immigrants with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture is one of the reasons for the lack of debate on multiculturalism in general in Japan.

As much seems to point toward an ever-increasing immigrant population in Japan, however, and with my arguments of Japan’s influx of Muslims in the late 1980s and early 1990s being likely to be only the beginning of an ever-growing group that will increase in size for every new period of guest workers imported who settle down, it is of major importance to start the scholarly debate on Muslims and multiculturalism in Japan as soon as possible. This debate is likely to only become increasingly relevant in the years to come, and it is my hope that this thesis will be able to make a useful contribution to the debate.

Since existing research on Muslims as contemporary immigrants almost exclusively focuses on Western Europe, taking a look at the situation in a society like Japan could potentially provide a valuable source for comparison to that field of research. When discussing the situation of, and the images of, Muslim immigrants in Europe, researchers frequently point to the very long history of dichotomisation of Europe and Islam.⁹ Arguably, if it wasn’t for this dichotomisation, the very formation of ‘Europe’ as a concept would not even have been possible: Europe and Islam have historically been dichotomised to form an idea of the European contra the non-European. Between Japan and the Islamic World, however, no comparable dichotomisation has existed. Indeed, during

⁴ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Multiculturalism*, Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2010, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

⁵ See details about the number of Muslims in Japan later in my thesis.

⁶ Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei - Statistics on the foreigners registered in Japan* (Tokyo, 2010).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Chinese and Koreans are Japan’s two largest foreign minority groups.

⁹ See for example Karin Creutz-Kämpfi and Peter Holly, “The rhetoric of Europeanness”, 2009, <http://bit.ly/iruANx> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

the height of the West's imperialistic and colonialist activities at the turn of the 20th century, which coincided with the nationalist awakenings in Islamic countries and Japan, the natural dichotomisation was in both Muslim and Japanese eyes rather between the oppressive West and the threatened East.

Researchers on Muslim immigrants in Europe frequently stress the influence of the belief in a Huntington-esque¹⁰ historic 'battle' of 'civilisations' between Europe and the Islamic World as an underlying contributor to today's perception of Muslims, but Japan's case is rather different. One should keep in mind that Japan and the Islamic World, at least up until World War Two, to some degree rather fought on the same side in the 'battle' of 'civilisations'. Although Huntington's post-Cold War theory on the clash of civilisations imagined Islamic, Christian and Japanese cultures as three separate competing civilisations, arguably based on contemporary popular images, this has not always been the case, as I will illustrate in my chapter on the history of Japanese images of Muslims. (Chapter 4). While I personally am critical to Huntington's theory, I also at the same time acknowledge its continuing impact on the discourse of intercultural relations.

Contemporary global labor migration is predominantly a process of movement from poorer, marginalized areas of the world to wealthier areas, as labor migration usually is for economic reasons, and movement from the former to the latter can mean a significant raise in wages. Among 'newcomer' immigrants that are tangibly different immigrants, with cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture, I have chosen to study Muslim immigrants because this group is heavily featured in Western European discourses on such topics as foreign minorities and multiculturalism, yet have not been discussed much in Japan. As any study attempting to discuss labor migration to Japan will naturally draw comparisons to labor migration to Europe,¹¹ it should be useful to discuss a group in Japan whose Western European counterpart has already thoroughly been discussed. This would not only provide an excellent framework for comparisons of Japan's and Europe's contemporary immigration situations, but also of historical differences between Japan's and Europe's respective relationships to marginalized parts of the world.

Past research on Muslims in Japan has generally been historical scholarship, or research on labor immigrants, or it has focused on Muslims as a religious minority. Historical studies on the relations between Japan and the Islamic World include such scholars as Japan historian Selçuk Esenbel of Bosphorus University and Islam Area Studies researcher Hideaki Sugita of the University of Tokyo. Notable works on labor immigrants include Hiroshi Komai's *Migrant workers*

¹⁰ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

¹¹ As Japan's labor migration situation arguably much more closely resembles that of Europe than the situation of the US, Canada or Australia - three countries commonly cited as alternative models to the 'European model' of immigration.

in Japan (1995), and more recently Apichai W. Shipper's *Fighting for Foreigners* (2008).¹² Both are about migrant workers in Japan in general, but both also make account of various aspect of the situation of such nationalities as Iranians, Bangladeshi, Indonesians and Pakistani. Furthermore, the compilation *Transcultural Japan* (2008) features an article by Onishi Akiko specifically focusing on identity and psychology issues among Muslim foreign workers.¹³

Various scholars - including Michael Penn, Hiroshi Kojima, Yasunori Kawakami and Keiko Sakurai - have published a number of shorter articles on the contemporary living situation and demographics of Muslims as a religious minority group in Japan, in English as well as Japanese. Sakurai's full volume on the topic, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai* (2003) is the only recent publication of its kind, but it is unfortunately only available in Japanese.¹⁴ To my best knowledge, no studies so far have explored Muslims in Japan as a culturally and tangibly different minority group in the context of multiculturalism in Japan. Employing the knowledge from the invaluable past research of the above scholars, I attempt to contribute to the scholarship on Muslims in Japan by adding a new perspective.

1.4 Theory and definitions of central concepts

Before moving on with my thesis, I believe it first is necessary to clarify my use of certain central terms, as well as explaining major theories that I apply in my thesis. The terms 'culture', 'ethnicity' and 'nationalism' should be rigidly defined to avoid any risk of ambiguity in my thesis. Furthermore, the acculturation strategies of separation, integration, marginalization and assimilation, as well as the policy frameworks of segregation, the 'melting pot' and multiculturalism need to be explained, as surely far from all readers are familiar with these concepts.

Culture

Clifford J. Geertz in his work *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) argued that the concept of culture is a semiotic one, and that one therefore when interpreting culture should focus on the signs that human actions signal, and the importance of these actions.¹⁵ Illustrating how many different meanings the word 'culture' has, Geertz refers to the ten meanings Clyde Kluckhohn lists in *Mirror*

¹² Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*.

¹³ Akiko Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim", in *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 217-235 (London & New York: Routledge 2008).

¹⁴ Keiko Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shinsho, 2003).

¹⁵ Clifford J. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, 1973), as quoted in Miraglia, Law and Collins, *What is Culture*, Washington State University, May 26, 1999, http://www.wsu.edu/gened/learn-modules/top_culture/culture-definitions/geertz-text.html (last accessed: May 9, 2011)

for Man: "the total way of life of a people", "the social legacy the individual acquires from his group", "a way of thinking, feeling, and believing", "an abstraction from behavior", "a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave", a "storehouse of pooled learning", "a set of standardized orientations to recurrent problems", "learned behavior", "a mechanism for the normative regulation of behavior", "a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men", "a precipitate of history" and "a behavioral map, sieve, or matrix".¹⁶ I consider all the above definitions quite useful for describing common meanings attached to the word culture. Nevertheless, my personal view of, and application of, the term 'culture' most closely matches the second definition listed. Furthermore, my appliance of the term even more closely matches the social anthropologist Arne Martin Klausen's definition of culture in *Kultur - variasjon og sammenheng* (1979):

"[T]he ideas, values, rules and norms that are passed on to a human being from the previous generation, and that one attempts to pass on to the following generation - often in a slightly changed form".¹⁷
(Translated from Norwegian)

While Giuliana B. Prato argues that in the field of anthropology, culture has traditionally been defined as a "set of rules, standards of behavior and values" (..) "which are shared and accepted as proper by the members of a society, or a specific social group",¹⁸ Klausen offers a definition that is more individual-oriented. Not presupposing any consensus among entire societies or social groups, it rather suggests similarities that may be found within the same family line - and even admits to the unavoidable changes that are likely to take place between each successive generation.

In light of my individual-oriented understanding of culture, I regard terms such as 'national culture' and 'Japanese culture' as not particularly useful, other than to describe vaguely defined, imagined concepts. The concept of 'national culture' always transforms following changes in historical circumstances, and can thus not only be described as imagined, but also fleeting. In addition, the imagining of the existence of a common national culture not only ignores the cultural variation found in the nation's minority groups, but also overly essentializes the members of the nations' majority group. In instances where a certain degree of essentialization of the majority is necessary for the sake of comparison, I will apply the sociological term "mainstream culture"¹⁹ to

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Arne Martin Klausen, *Kultur - variasjon og sammenheng* (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1970), 10

¹⁸ Giuliana B. Prato, "Introduction - Beyond Multiculturalism: Anthropology at the Intersection Between the Local, the National and the Global", in *Beyond Multiculturalism*, edited by Giuliana B. Prato, 1-19 (Farnham: Ashgate 2009), 3-4

¹⁹ See for example Jay Gabler, *Sociology for Dummies* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 91.

describe widespread norms, ideas, values, traditions and practices in Japan shared by the majority of the population.

Baumann argues that the traditional view on culture in anthropology that Prato describes is essentialist, and suggests a new view of culture as a constantly changing entity that only exists in the act of being performed.²⁰ While I agree that culture is constantly changing - and constantly interacting with, and mutually influencing, other cultures - I am critical to overlooking the consistency of cultural practices within the same family line. While I certainly do not believe a Pakistani family moving to a neighborhood in Japan holds a unique Pakistani national culture shared by all other Pakistani, nor a unique Muslim culture shared by all other believers of Islam, I do believe that each individual family members' cultural practices are likely to differ more from their Japanese neighbor families' practices than these surrounding Japanese families' practices differ from each other. Therefore, I find "mainstream culture" to be a useful term.

Regarding the ideas, values, rules and norms (henceforth: culture) of each individual member of Japan's minority group of Muslim immigrants - passed on to him or her from his or her parents - to be likely to be greatly different from those of the majority in Japan, I think it is useful to describe these immigrants as individuals with 'cultures far removed from Japanese mainstream culture'.

Ethnicity

Ethnic groups are by Hylland Eriksen's (1993) definition groups that assume that they have different origins and regard themselves as more or less culturally different.²¹ The concept's modern form derives from Fredrik Barth's anthology *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969), where he described ethnicity as a category applied for the sake of contrast. For example, a Japanese individual may consider him- or herself as being of 'Japanese ethnicity' when contrasting him- or herself to for example Norwegians or Koreans. Thus, ethnicity is a concept describing a particular way of drawing boundaries between groups.

The acculturation strategies of separation, integration, marginalization and assimilation

Sam and Berry define acculturation as "the meeting of cultures and the resulting changes".²² In their work *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology* (2006), they list four different acculturation strategies that can be chosen by members of ethnic and/or cultural minority groups:

²⁰ Baumann, as quoted in Prato, "Introduction - Beyond Multiculturalism", 4.

²¹ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity And Nationalism* (Pluto Press, 1993, new print from 2002).

²² David L. Sam and John W. Berry (ed), *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1.

separation, integration, marginalization and assimilation.²³ They define ‘separation’ as when individuals place value on holding on to their original culture, and at the same time wish to avoid contact with the host society. ‘Integration’ is defined as having an interest in both maintaining one’s original culture, and seeking interaction with other cultural groups: In this strategy, cultural integrity is maintained, while participating as a part of a larger social network is placed importance upon as well. ‘Marginalization’ is defined as when, due to reasons such as discrimination, there is little interest or possibility in cultural maintenance as well as little interest in interacting with others.²⁴ The ‘assimilation’ strategy is defined as not wishing to maintain one’s cultural identity, and seeking interaction with the host culture.

Contemporary studies of the assimilation of foreigners typically focuses on the case of the United States. Martellone describes it as a concept applied in the US of post-Darwinian times to replace the previous doctrine of Anglo-conformity.²⁵ Assimilation incorporates organic theories on the “entity and individuality of nations” with origins “well before Darwin”, and “views nations as organisms”²⁶. One can trace the origins of the thought of nations as organisms back to evolutionists like Herbert Spencer (1820 - 1903), who argued both have a regulative system (the central nervous system in the one, government in the other), a sustaining system (alimentation in the one case, industry in the other), and a distribution system (veins and arteries in the first; roads, telegraphs, etc., in the second).²⁷ Martellone argues that the term assimilation gives connotations to ideas “of a living organism that assimilates elements that were initially external” absorbing these elements and making them its own. “If [it wasn’t able to do this], it would reject them, considering them as foreign objects, and even as lethal to its own biological balance”.²⁸

Host society’s policies towards ethnic minority groups

Gordon distinguishes between two different types of assimilation: cultural and structural assimilation. The former corresponds with the type of acculturation process for immigrants described above, while the latter describes the process of society incorporating and integrating the immigrants and their descendants into its educational, political and occupational institutions, and

²³ Sam and Berry, *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology*, 35.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Anna Maria Martellone, “National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States”, in Valeria Gennaro Lerda (ed), *From ‘Melting Pot’ to Multiculturalism. The Evolution of Ethnic Relations in the United States and Canada* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1990), 11.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, “Herbert Spencer”, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/559249/Herbert-Spencer> (last accessed: April 20, 2011).

²⁸ Martellone, “National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States”, 11.

into the social institutions that allow for intimate relationships such as intermarriage.²⁹ When discussing measures to include and integrate immigrants on a structural level, I will describe this process as “structural assimilation”.

A society which finds itself host to ethnic or cultural minority groups may employ any of a number of different policy strategies when determining how to deal with this. Ignoring the extreme strategies of excluding or exterminating minority groups, there are three strategies well worth discussion: segregation, the ‘melting pot’ and multiculturalism. Sam and Berry describe the strategy of ‘segregation’ as one where “ethnic differences are allowed, but kept out of participation in the life of the larger society”,³⁰ and the ‘melting pot’ and multiculturalism as two types of societies allowing the minorities to participate in society.

In the former, there is a single dominant or *mainstream* society, with minority groups on its margins. In order to move from the margins into society, the groups need to assimilate, in other words ‘disappear’. In the latter, a mosaic of ethnic and/or cultural groups hold different cultural identities, while sharing some (flexible) norms with the larger society, like how to live together.³¹ The policy choice of the ‘melting pot’ society has strong links to the individual acculturation strategy of assimilation, and is to some degree also linked to integration. The policy choice of the multicultural society, on the other hand, is in theory able to accommodate individuals choosing assimilation as well as integration and separation strategies. Being a complex concept, multiculturalism is in need of further elaboration.

Multiculturalism in detail

The origins of multiculturalism can be traced back to the abolishment of the evolutionist stance of regarding some cultures as more worth than others, and the introduction of cultural relativism, in the aftermath of World War Two and Western colonialism. Essential to this aforementioned abolishment was Franz Boas (1858 - 1942) - the pioneer of modern anthropology, who rejected evolutionary classifications of cultures and insisted they should be studied from a neutral point of view without ethnocentric value judgements. His students further developed the idea, and ultimately anthropologists embraced cultural relativism.³²

²⁹ Gordon, as quoted in Silvia Pedraza, "Assimilation or Transnationalism? Conceptual Models of the Immigrant Experience in America", in Ramaswami Mahalingam (ed), *Cultural Psychology of Immigrants* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 41.

³⁰ Sam and Berry, *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology*, 20

³¹ Sam and Berry, *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology*, 28

³² Prato, “Introduction - Beyond Multiculturalism”, 4-5.

Moreover, justification for multiculturalism can be linked to communitarian critique of liberalism. Simply put, communitarians reject the idea that the value of social goods can be reduced to their contribution to individual well-being. They regard diverse cultural identities and languages as social goods, and of equal value, and therefore advocate special rights for minority cultural groups³³. In political philosophy multiculturalism is the body of thought that deals with the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversity.³⁴ Central to this political body of thought stands the recognition and positive accommodation of group differences through "group-differentiated rights", to use Will Kymlicka's term.³⁵ These can be on the individual level: individuals being granted exemptions from laws due to religious beliefs, or being accommodated or assisted in matters where the majority does not need any assistance or accommodation. They can also be on the group level, where they among other things may encompass the rights of self-determination for collective matters for ethnic groups or minority nations.

Although other disadvantaged groups also apply the term, most political philosophy theorists, when using the term multiculturalism, focus on immigrants who are religious minorities (such as Muslims in Western Europe), minority nations (such as the Basque country) and indigenous people (like *ainu* in Japan). Multicultural claims include a wide range of claims including religion, language, ethnicity, nationality and race, but these are lumped together under the umbrella term "culture".³⁶ When applying the term multiculturalism in my thesis, it will mainly be to describe this recognition and accommodation of the cultural claims and differences of foreign immigrant minorities.

The degree of accommodation and toleration of cultural differences varies between multicultural states, and several different models of applied multiculturalism exist in the world today. The term can mean the advocacy of equal social rights to the various religious and ethnic groups in a nation state, but in its most egalitarian manifestations it can even mean doing this without promoting either of them as national 'mainstream' society, or promoting the values of either of them as a national standard. Also, depending on the model of multiculturalism, a state may even to some degree tolerate that each of these groups use their own languages, sometimes even in the public sphere.

³³ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Multiculturalism*.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Kymlicka, as quoted in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Multiculturalism*.

³⁶ Song, as referenced in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Multiculturalism*.

Some of the world's nation states pronounce several different languages as official state languages or national languages. The states of Australia, Chile, United States and the Vatican city have, as the only four states in the world, no *de jura* national language or state language, but they all have quite obvious *de facto* official languages. In today's multicultural states, it seems like a *lingua franca*, or at least a highly limited number of *lingua franca*, is indeed needed to govern the polity. The pluralization of languages in use (and the accommodation of these) within the multicultural nation state seems to remain a point of controversy in multicultural societies.

Nationalism

Benedict Anderson in his work *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1991) argued that the origins of nations can be explained as a part of the process of industrialization and modernization. In his view, nations developed as a necessary component of industrial society, though neither "economic interest, Liberalism, nor Enlightenment could, or did, create in themselves the kind, or shape, of imagined community" that nations turned into - it was the capitalist print media, he argues, who made it historically possible.³⁷

The nation is an imagined community, he argues, because it is a social construction and because regardless of the inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each individual nation, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately, he defines the nation as "an imagined political community [that is] imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign"³⁸. When applying the term 'nationalism' in my thesis, I am referring to a group of individuals' strong identification with this type of imagined community.

1.5 Methodology

My methodology of choice for this thesis is a discourse-historical approach to discourse analysis. The term 'discourse' can be defined as "a group of ideas or patterned way of thinking which can be identified in textual and verbal communications, and can also be located in wider social structures"³⁹. Producers of discourse may include sociologists, historians, politicians, journalists

³⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edition ed. (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 65.

³⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 224.

³⁹ Deborah Lupton, "Discourse analysis: a new methodology for understanding the ideologies of health and illness", *Australian Journal of Public Health*, Volume 16, Issue 2 (June 1992), 145–150, <http://bit.ly/mIxFJX> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

and more⁴⁰. Discourse analysis mainly concerns itself with critical analysis of the use of language and the reproduction of dominant ideologies in discourse.⁴¹

Aims of critical discourse analysis include detecting discourses, linking texts (defined as specific and unique realizations of discourse) to discourses, and finding ‘typical’ examples rather than cherry-picking unique instances.⁴² Critical discourse analysis is a useful method for exploring reasons for, and strategies of, marginalization of society’s minority groups. It attempts to unveil strategies of self- and other-representation, by analyzing “traits, characteristics, qualities and features” attributed to either, and exploring “by means of what arguments and argumentation schemes specific persons or social groups try to justify and legitimize the exclusion of others or inclusion of some”.⁴³

Agreeing with Michel Foucault’s view that discourse cannot be analyzed only in the present, since discourses’ power components and historical components create a tangled knot of shifting meanings, definitions, and interested parties over periods of time⁴⁴, I have chosen to opt for a discourse-historical approach to discourse analysis. This allows my analysis of Japan’s discourses of current social phenomena to be contextually connected to the country’s complex and unique modern history.

One of the aims of the discourse-historical approach is “to ‘demystify’ the hegemony of specific discourses by deciphering the ideologies that establish, perpetuate or fight dominance”, as well as critically analyzing “the language use of those in power who have the means and opportunities to improve conditions”. In my historical discourse analysis, I employ a large number of objects of analysis, including historical documents, television shows, websites and magazines, as well as discussions and statements by politicians, authorities, academics, representative of non-governmental organizations and more. I attempt a *contextualisation* of these objects of analysis - within not only the historical, but also the national and transnational, social and political contexts of their production - followed by in-depth qualitative analyses.

⁴⁰ Pierre Bordieu, in Rodney Dean Benson and Érik Neveu, *Bourdieu and the journalistic field* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 37.

⁴¹ Lupton, *Discourse analysis*.

⁴² Ruth Wodak, “Introducing CDA and the Discourse-Historical Approach – Media in Times of Political Crisis”, Lecture on November 30, 2009, Lancaster University, <http://bit.ly/hi5uxQ> (last accessed: April 20, 2011).

⁴³ Wodak, “Introducing CDA and the Discourse-Historical Approach”.

⁴⁴ Penny Powers, *The methodology of discourse analysis* (New York: Jones & Bartlett Pub, 2001), 11

1.6 Language transcription and character usage

Name transcription

Whenever names are transcribed from Japanese, Korean and Chinese in this thesis, given names precede the family name, in accordance with Western practice. Although this differs from the way these names are used in the context of their original language, this method of transcription should reduce confusion and ensure consistency in my thesis. It also corresponds with the way many of these individuals choose to transcribe their own name when writing in Western languages.

Hepburn romanization

When transcribing words originally written in Japanese characters to the Latin alphabet, I romanize them in accordance with the Hepburn system. In the Hepburn system, long vowels are indicated by macrons - e.g., the Japanese long ‘o’ is written ‘ō’. Hepburn is based on English phonology, and widely used in English-language scholarship on Japan. English speakers unfamiliar with Japanese will typically pronounce words romanized in Hepburn more accurately than those romanized in the competing *Kunrei-shiki*, a system of romanization that is based on Japanese phonology and therefore arguably less suitable for readers who lack proficiency in the Japanese language.

Quotation marks and italics

Throughout my thesis, whenever I regard a concept as questionable in its nature, e.g. concepts such as ‘race’, ‘homogeneous’ societies etc., I distance myself from them with the use of single quotation marks. When I am directly quoting specific texts or persons, I employ double quotation marks. On any quasi-quotation or popular term that has no specific source, I will use single quotation marks. I write foreign words, such as *masatsu* or *Gastarbeiter*, using Italic font, and use double quotation marks in my translations or explanations of these words, e.g. “friction” or “guest worker”.

2. Immigration and foreign residents in Japan

2.1 Greying of society: *kōreika* and *shōshika*

A major argument speaking for extensive acceptance of immigrants to Japan is the country's current demographical problems of *kōreika*, “greying of society”, and *shōshika*, “declining birth rate”.

Japan's working-age population is expected to decrease by 70 percent from 2009 to 2050⁴⁵. Not only does Japan have a critically low birth rate, but the country also has one of the highest life expectancies in the world: In a 2009 CIA estimate, Japan's life expectancy was ranked third in the world with an expectancy of 82.12 years.⁴⁶ This causes a serious imbalance in birth and death rates.

The American demographer Warren Thompson's 1929 Demographic Transition model presented four different stages of birth and death rates that countries go through in their development. Stage one is that of the pre-industrial society, where both death and birth rates are high, securing balance. Stage two is that of a developing country, where better living conditions cause the death rates to drop, but birth rates don't drop correspondingly, causing imbalance and rapid population growth. Stage three is among other things marked by urbanization and a decrease in birth rate due to access to contraception, returning balance. In stage four, both death rates and birth rates are low, with fertility rates of 2.5 (children per female) or less, and the large group born during stage two constitutes an economic burden for the shrinking working population⁴⁷. Contemporary scholars may argue that when applying this model to the world of today, a fifth stage, characterized by fertility rates below the replacement level (usually about 2.0) should be added. Japan can be described as currently being in this stage, along with Western European nations such as Germany and Italy. The US nonprofit organization Population Reference Bureau in 2010 reported:

⁴⁵ Blaine Harden, “Japanerne vil ha flere barn”, Norwegian translation published in *Aftenposten*, April 26, 2009. Originally from *The Washington Post*, Tokyo.

⁴⁶ CIA, *The World Factbook - Country Comparisons: Life expectancy at birth*, CIA, 2011, <http://l.usa.gov/mlBqtc> (last accessed: May 9, 2011)

⁴⁷ Paul George Demeny and Geoffrey McNicoll, *Encyclopedia of Population* (Macmillan Reference USA, 2003)

“Japan has a total fertility rate of 1.4 children per woman, and an elderly support ratio of 3 — the lowest in the world, along with Germany and Italy. By 2050, Japan will have only 1 working-age adult for every elderly person; Germany and Italy will each have 2”.⁴⁸ (Population Reference Bureau)

While 2050 may seem distant, the problem is expected to become more serious even sooner: Estimates warn that in 2025, almost 30 % of Japan's population will be 65 years or older. In this vision of 2025, there will then be only two people of working age (15-64) supporting every person of retirement age (65+).⁴⁹ Potential negative economic consequences of *shōshika* and *kōreika* are numerous: For example, the domestic consumer market is likely to shrink, and small and medium-sized enterprises are expected to increasingly struggle to survive, being dependent on cheap labor.

Additionally, the working age population faces an increasing number of social challenges. Recent studies indicate there is an increase of Japanese male workers who are left with no other option but to quit their jobs in order to take care of their parents or wives.⁵⁰ To take care of the elderly has in Japan traditionally been the task of the family, but this tradition has always presupposed the existence of a housewife in the household. With the increase in unmarried singles and working women, and in families getting smaller, this is no longer always the case. According to Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications data, in 1990 single men in their 40s and single men in their 50s made up 9.2 and 3.6 percent of the population respectively, while they in 2005 had doubled to 19.6 percent and tripled to 11.9 percent respectively.⁵¹ With an optimistic perspective, these numbers could potentially just indicate an increase in unmarried cohabitation in Japan, mirroring similar trends in Western European countries. Yet, that has so far not been confirmed to be the case.⁵²

Japan's National Institute of Population and Security Research estimates that due to the falling birth rate, aging population, increase in people not marrying and other factors, in 2030 no less than 37.7 percent of households with people 65 or older will be single-person households.⁵³

⁴⁸ Population Reference Bureau, *2010 World Population Sheet*, Population Reference Bureau, published July 28, 2010, <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2010/2010wpds.aspx> (last accessed October 29, 2010).

⁴⁹ Roger Goodman, and Sarah Harper, *Japan in the New Global Demography: Comparative Perspectives*, JapanFocus, 2002-2011, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-S-Harper/2472> (last accessed September 21, 2010).

⁵⁰ Natsuko Fukue, *Salarymen feeling pressure of elderly care*, The Japan Times Online, October 22, 2010, <http://bit.ly/kXPXOt> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

⁵¹ Fukue, “Salarymen feeling pressure of elderly care”.

⁵² While no concrete answer to this theory exists, recent research indicates that cohabitation in Japan is increasing, but that it is usually short-lived, with cohabitation relationships having the same chance as failing as ending up in marriage - thus differentiating Japan's case from countries such as Sweden and France, where cohabitation is seen as an alternative to marriage. See James M. Raymo, Miho Iwasawa and Larry Bumpass, “Cohabitation and Family Formation in Japan”, *Demography*, Volume 46, Number 4, (November 2009), 785-803, <http://bit.ly/f2mHyi>.

⁵³ Mainichi Japan, *Japan and Denmark: Two very different approaches to social welfare*, The Mainichi Daily News, December 1, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jP0Ze2> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

How can today's workers in their 30s secure the care that they will need in their senior years? Turning to adoption is not an option to turn the *shōshika* trend, as Japan's sinking birth rate by no means indicates any biological incapability to produce offspring, but rather changes in lifestyle. Young people (women in particular) becoming less interested in having multiple children is a common tendency in all modern industrialized societies once they reach a certain level of affluence⁵⁴.

The graveness of *shōshika* may sometimes be presented as a problem unique to Japan, but Japan's birth rate is not very different from those of similar industrialized countries. Comparing Japan's number of births per 1000 persons to European countries, it is as mentioned similar to those of both Germany and Italy.⁵⁵ Even in a regional perspective, Japan's birth rate is hardly unique: The CIA's index of birth rates ranks not only Japan's, but also Taiwan's and South Korea's birth rates among the world's thirteen lowest.⁵⁶ Arguably, the remarkable speed in which Japan's population is shrinking is related to Japan's combination of low birth rate and critically low immigration rate. Gabriele Vogt, Japan researcher at the University of Hamburg, argues that all three major demographic variables are "extreme" in Japan: Birth rate, life expectancy and migration flow.⁵⁷

All of the world's industrialized countries experience declining birth rates as they reach high levels of development, and it appears unlikely that any of them should manage to completely turn the trend. It is safe to assume Japan, like all other industrialized nations, will continue to have a relatively low birth rate, and will fail to fully reverse the trend. Therefore, it can seem like Japan has no choice but to supplement efforts of slightly improving its birth rate with significant replacement migration. Yet, Japanese politicians show strong reluctance towards immigration as counter-measure to the greying of society, for reasons that I will elaborate upon in the next chapter section.

There are strong indications that one of the key ongoing challenges of Japan in the coming decades will be to tackle the problems of *shōshika* and *kōreika*. It is arguably not surprising that Japan is yet to find solutions, nor that the country until this point have been struggling to consider immigration as a counter-measure, as the whole issue only fairly recently has become an object for debate. However, Japan does need to reach some sort of productive conclusion soon, as the

⁵⁴ For couples who actually are unable to biologically produce an offspring however, adoption may be too impractical to be a viable option, recent reports show. The Japan Times in September 2010 reported that LDP lawmaker Seiko Noda got turned down by a private adoption company because of her age - fifty - and the fact that she's working full-time. The article cites that adoption rules vary by prefecture and organization, but in the case of Tokyo, certain rules about the parents' age as well as their living accommodations apply. See Fukue, Natsuko, *For most, adoption option impractical, iff*, The Japan Times Online, September 8, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100908f2.html> (last accessed October 21st, 2010).

⁵⁵ CIA, *The World Factbook - Country Comparisons: Birth Rate*, CIA, 2011, <http://1.usa.gov/kdbqlr> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

⁵⁶ CIA, *The World Factbook - Country Comparisons: Birth Rate*.

⁵⁷ Gabriele Vogt, *Bevölkerungsentwicklung in Japan: Fokus Migration*, Berlin-Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung, October 2008, <http://bit.ly/cuyFyE> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

demographic crisis is turning increasingly urgent. But what is Japan's past experience with immigration? In the next section of this chapter, I will provide a brief chronological rundown of Japan's post-war experience with immigration and foreign minorities.

2.2 Immigration and foreign minorities in post-war Japan

Kibe argues that despite the *de facto* existence of labor immigrants in the form of *nikkeijin*, trainees and 'illegals', Japan has had a *de jura* policy of 'non-immigration', and points to the fact that migration scholars therefore have regarded the country as an "anomaly" among industrialized nations⁵⁸. What underlying historic factors contributed to the current state of "anomaly"?

1945 - 1952: The Empire dissolves

In the first half of the 20th century, Japan was an aggressive and expansionist empire. During this period, an increasing number of diaspora resided in what is now Japan: Some, like the Koreans, were colonial subjects who had moved to the 'core' of the Empire either voluntarily or through being solicited for forced labor, while others were political exiles who had escaped oppression in their home country and shared Japan's radical political views. A number of Muslim diaspora also resided in Japan at this point, as the country's political climate in the decades leading to war turned increasingly Islam-friendly, for reasons that I will elaborate further in Chapter 4 (where I will give an account of Japan's pre-war relationship with the Islamic World). Few of the Muslim diaspora in Japan remained after the war, however: Some immigrated to Turkey, others to the United States.⁵⁹

Selçuk Esenbel of Bosphorus University argues that the Muslims who remained in Japan didn't fit into the new post-war Japanese society, "which developed amnesia about its pre-war Asianist past"⁶⁰. When the Japanese Empire was officially dissolved at the San Francisco peace treaty of 1952, all former colonial subjects of the Empire lost their citizenship. This set the stage for a nationality very closely linked to ethnicity. In a swift and rigorous rebranding effort, Japan went from being an ever-expanding multicultural empire to limiting the categories of 'Japan' and 'Japanese' to only one strict area and ethnicity, respectively. This drastic change in Japan's self-image would eventually be of major influence to foreign minority discourse.

⁵⁸Takashi Kibe, "Immigration and Integration Policies in Japan: At the Crossroads of the Welfare State and the Labour Market", in *Migration and Integration - Japan in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Gabriele Vogt and Glenda S. Roberts, 58-71 (München: iudicium, 2011), 58.

⁵⁹ Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 4 (October 2004): 1140-1170. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3524067>, 1170.

⁶⁰ Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1170.

This differs greatly from the way the British Empire treated its former colonial subjects after decolonization. Britain arranged all former colonies into the British Commonwealth, an intergovernmental organization where each member state was to be considered equal. Furthermore, all former ‘British subjects’ were henceforth to be called ‘Commonwealth citizens’. To illustrate the significance of former colonial subjects enjoying Commonwealth citizenship, one can look at 1950s and 60s Britain, when considerable numbers of Caribbeans and residents of the Indian subcontinent took advantage of their Commonwealth citizenship and migrated to Britain.⁶¹ Work opportunities in the UK has made this modern extension of colonial citizenship a big advantage to these immigrants.

The former colonial subjects of Japan received no such privileges: After being stripped of their Japanese nationality, they were simply to be regarded as foreign nationals. The Empire’s colonial subjects arguably never enjoyed proper citizenship in the first place, however, being registered on a different type of *koseki* (“family register”) than ‘ethnic Japanese’: The former were registered on *gaichi* (“overseas territories”) registers, the latter on *naichi* (inland) registers.⁶² From 1952 the only existing type of *koseki* would be the one for ‘ethnic Japanese’, as the concept of *gaichi* officially ceased to exist. The former *gaichi koseki* registered citizens who for various reasons remained in Japan after the war were from now on foreign citizens. Either way, the year of 1952 can be regarded as the beginning of Japan’s post-war experience with foreign minorities.

1950s through 1970s: Overpopulation, rural migration and urbanization

After regaining sovereignty in the peace treaty, Japan began its project of developing a new pacifist nation-state radically different from the Empire. Depriving former colonial subjects of their Japanese citizenship can be interpreted as a move to fully abandon the pre-war project of Japanizing East-Asians neighbor countries. The latter half of the 20th century would see Japan actively promoting itself as a ‘homogenous’ or ‘single-race’ nation. Traces of the country’s imperialist and multiethnic past were however not easy to ignore or erase: especially the approximately 600,000 Koreans present in Japan were an obstacle to this rebranding of the nation.⁶³ Thus, the Japanese government started contemplating a way to solve the ‘Korean problem’. These Koreans were by this point technically stateless, their home country having been divided into North and South Korea - neither of which the Japanese government would acknowledge as nations. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Japanese government actively promoted relocation of Koreans from Japan to the

⁶¹ Peter Kivisto, *Multiculturalism in a Global Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 5.

⁶² Sonya Ryang, *North Koreans In Japan: Language, Ideology, And Identity* (Westview Press: 1997), 129.

⁶³ The most numerous foreign minority.

new communist state of North Korea, disguising this solution to the 'Korean problem' as a humanitarian project to assist diaspora in returning 'home'.⁶⁴

Japan struggled with an overabundance of people in the years 1945 to 1950, when 6.25 million people stationed abroad during the war returned to Japan, and another 6.4 million children were born. The overpopulation prompted the Japanese government to promote emigration to South America as a counter-measure.⁶⁵ While European countries were already highly dependent on mass immigration of workers in the 1950s and 60s, in Japan returning soldiers and rural migrants provided sufficient cheap labor.⁶⁶ Comparing the Japan and Western Europe of the immediate post-war years is difficult because the majority of Japan was still predominantly rural. Having no need for foreign labor, Japan's 'single-race' policy could appear convincing to most people in this period.

The government eventually gave up its strategy of sending all Koreans home, and diplomatic ties were reestablished between South Korea and Japan in 1965. *Zainichi* now gained the possibility to attain the new legal status of *tokubetsu eijūsha* - "special permanent resident", finally establishing their status in Japanese society to some degree.⁶⁷ But special permanent residency status did not qualify them for governmental jobs or voting rights, and they were still subject to discrimination from Japanese companies who refused to hire anyone but Japanese citizens.

As migration from the countryside continued, three-quarters of Japan's population lived in urban areas in 1970 - compared to one-third in 1950.⁶⁸ With neither rural migrants nor war returnees available as cheap labor anymore, an inflow of foreign 'trainees' began in the late 1960s and early 1970s - but no significant numbers yet. The late 70s saw the first large-scale entrance of foreigners, but only women, who came to work in the sex and entertainment industry.⁶⁹ Summarizing Japan's immigration history of the 1950s through the 1970s, one can say that the country had quite limited immigration in this period. It is however worth noting that this view only takes official immigration into account. Tessa Morris-Suzuki in a recent essay (2006) challenged the dominant view of Japan

⁶⁴ Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007).

⁶⁵ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 39.

⁶⁶ Glenda S. Roberts and Michael Douglass (ed), *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 6.

⁶⁷ Glenda S. Roberts, "Immigration policy", In *The Demographic Challenge: A Handbook about Japan*, edited by Florian Coulmas et al, 765-779 (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2008), 766.

⁶⁸ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*.

⁶⁹ Komai, *Migrant workers in Japan*, 2.

not depending on immigration from the 1950s through the 1970s, casting light on what she describes as “undocumented immigration” in these first post-war decades⁷⁰.

1980s: Entering the First Wave of immigration

In the 1980s, at the height of Japan's post-war economic expansion, the issue of labor supply became a serious problem, especially in small and medium-sized manufacturing companies, the construction industry and the service industry.⁷¹ While the demand for Japanese products was unstoppable, manufacturing companies found they couldn't complete their orders because of worker shortage, and also struggled with the rising value of the yen against the dollar, which made it hard to move production off-shore.⁷² Yet, Japan's official policy was to only provide visas to skilled workers, and only for limited time periods.⁷³ This had been Japan's policy towards employment of foreigners from the very beginning: In the late Tokugawa period⁷⁴ and the Meiji period, so-called *oyatoi gaikokujin* - “hired foreigners” were imported to assist Japan's modernization. They were highly skilled professionals, but only considered to be advisors, and a temporary presence.⁷⁵ This system remained in the 80s, through the principle of only accepting skilled foreigners, for expertise in areas where one could benefit from foreign knowledge. This policy did not correspond well with industry's demand for unskilled labor. By this point, there was also a tendency of young Japanese being more highly educated than before, and thus increasingly unwilling to work in so-called ‘3K’ professions: *kitanai*, “dirty”; *kiken*, “dangerous”; and *kitsui*, “hard”.

Consequently, Japan finally entered its First Wave of labor immigration this decade, 30 years after Germany, France and the United Kingdom did.⁷⁶ The government legally only provided work visas to skilled workers, but not only did a lot of skilled workers such as students, English teachers and businessmen⁷⁷ seek opportunity in Japan's booming bubble economy, but masses of unskilled

⁷⁰ Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Invisible Immigrants: Undocumented Migration and Border Controls in Early Post-War Japan*, JapanFocus, 2006, http://www.japanfocus.org/-Tessa-Morris_Suzuki/2210 (last accessed May 9, 2011)

⁷¹ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 768; Roger Goodman, “Afterword: Marginals, minorities, majorities and migrants - studying the Japanese borderlands in contemporary Japan”, in *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 325-333 (London & New York: Routledge 2008).

⁷² Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, 6

⁷³ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 767.

⁷⁴ The Tokugawa Period, also known as the Edo Period, lasted from 1603 to 1868.

⁷⁵ Jones, Hazel J. *Live Machines: Hired Foreigners and Meiji Japan*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980.

⁷⁶ Roger Goodman, “Afterword: Marginals, minorities, majorities and migrants - studying the Japanese borderlands in contemporary Japan”, in *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 325-333 (London & New York: Routledge 2008).

⁷⁷ Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, “The invisible man”, in *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 282-304 (London & New York: Routledge 2008)

workers also found jobs in factories and construction sites that experienced labor shortage and did not refrain from hiring workers without valid visas.⁷⁸

While the government officially did not want to support migration of foreign unskilled workers, they eventually did work out a way to fill positions in the undermanned unskilled labor market without calling it 'immigration': The 'trainee' program was launched by the government in 1981, and has since been a source of temporary legal immigrant workers, but also a cause of increase in 'illegal' immigrants. It has been revised several times, but in its present form, it gives foreigners the opportunity to enter Japan with the purpose of 'technology transfer', allowing them to be trained and later take up technical internships at Japanese companies for up to three years.⁷⁹ Arguably, it is in reality nothing but a 'guest worker' program in disguise. The number of trainees was in 2008 estimated to be about 150,000.⁸⁰ Although technically only allowed to engage in activities to acquire technology, skills or knowledge, they in reality rarely receive 'training', and work in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in industries that do not attract Japanese because of their '3K' status.⁸¹

The 1980s saw the first new inflow of Muslims to Japan since the pre-1945 pro-Islam environment, as immigration included a considerable amount of laborers from Islamic countries.⁸² Sakurai claims that there were 10,000 Muslims in Japan in the late 80s⁸³. E. Farah however claims that there were as many as 30,000 Muslims in Japan in 1982.⁸⁴

1990: The new Immigration Law

Following the 1980s' inflow of 'illegal' workers, in 1989 the policy of allowing citizens of Pakistan and Bangladesh temporary entry without visa was discontinued⁸⁵, and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) also revised the Immigration Law this year.⁸⁶ (In 1992 visa-less entry was discontinued for Iranians

⁷⁸ Keiko Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan", in "Roundtable. Islam in Japan: A Cause for Concern?", *Asia Policy*, Number 5 (January 2008) 61-104, <http://bit.ly/jY52OM> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

⁷⁹ Roberts, "Immigration policy", 767.

⁸⁰ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 42

⁸¹ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 43.

⁸² Martin, Alex and Matsutani, Minoru. *Islamic community lays down roots*. Japan Times, November 14th 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101114f1.html> (last accessed November 15th, 2010).

⁸³ Sakurai, as cited in Michael Penn, "Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity", *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 1 (Winter 2006).

⁸⁴ Farah, Caesar, *Islam: Beliefs and Observations*, 7th Revised edition, (New York: Barron's Educational Series, 2003), 291.

⁸⁵ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

⁸⁶ Or rather the *Shutsunyūkoku Kanri Oyobi Nanmin Nintei-hō*, "Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law".

as well.⁸⁷) The revised Immigration Law, which went into effect in 1990, made it very easy for ‘ethnic Japanese’ abroad to migrate to Japan and work: All they needed was to locate their name on a pre-war *koseki*.⁸⁸ This caused a major influx of South Americans of Japanese descent.

The law has been criticized for being a racist ‘Japanese Only’ policy: The South American Japanese who entered Japan this way might be unskilled workers, but Japan instantly allowed them entry while denying visas to unskilled worker immigrants of other ‘races’ from the same region. Shipper argues that the MOJ ranks *nikkeijin* higher than other immigrants by “racial-descent criteria” because of a “belief in racial dominance”.⁸⁹ However, Harumi Befu has argued⁹⁰ that the intention of the revised law actually was to facilitate the return of the approximately 10,000 Japanese children and wives were left behind when Japan moved out of Manchuria in 1958.⁹¹ 10,000 is a relatively small number, and it can indeed be argued that the government simply did not expect hundreds of thousands of South American Japanese to take advantage of the revised law. This casts doubt to the assumption that the Japanese government was introducing a racial ordering to their immigration policies.

Japan’s citizenship principle is *jus sanguinis*, nationality based on the ‘blood’ one is born with, rather than *jus soli*, nationality based on the territory one is born in.⁹² In countries like the UK and the US, a child becomes a national of that nation when born in the nation to two foreign nationals, but in Japan this is not the case.⁹³ The Japanese Nationality Law has been based on blood line, ever since it came into effect in the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty, and the revised 1990 version arguably just introduced further elements of blood line ideas. With its new Immigration Law, Japan to a certain degree followed the policies of Germany and Israel, who in a similar fashion make it easier for those of ‘German’ or ‘Jewish’ heritage to immigrate. But since Germany and Israel provide full citizenship to these ‘returnees’, and Japan only provides them the status of *teijūsha* - “long-term residents”, the Japanese version of the policy can be viewed as a moderate one. South Korea has a similar system to Japan, prioritizing overseas Koreans expatriates. In certain

⁸⁷ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

⁸⁸ Mariko Tamanoi Asano 2006: “Overseas Japanese and the Challenges of Repatriation in Post-Colonial East Asia”, In *Japanese Diasporas: Unsung Pasts, Conflicting Presents, and Uncertain Futures*, ed. Nobuko Adachi, Routledge, London.

⁸⁹ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 26-37.

⁹⁰ Note number 2 in David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu: “Ethnoscapes and the other”, In *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 305-324 (London & New York: Routledge 2008).

⁹¹ Rowena Ward, *Left Behind: Japan’s Wartime Defeat and the Stranded Women of Manchukuo*, JapanFocus, 2007, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Rowena-Ward/2374> (last accessed May 10, 2011).

⁹² Kashiwasaki, as cited in Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 766.

⁹³ Kyodo News: *Yearning for multiculturalism*, The Japan Times Online, December 10, 2010, <http://bit.ly/emuPgt> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

cases, they grant returnees nationality, but unlike in Germany and Israel there is no guarantee for this.⁹⁴ Moreover, since a 2010 revision of the Korean nationality law, a very limited number of people are even allowed dual citizenship.⁹⁵

2000: The ‘wake-up call’

In 2000, *kōreika* and *shōshika*’s relation to immigration became a topic of debate in Japan, as the United Nations published a report on “the international migration that a country would need to prevent population decline and population aging resulting from low fertility and mortality rates”.⁹⁶ The report found population decline to be inevitable in the absence of ‘replacement migration’, and stated that while fertility may see an upswing in coming decades, few believe it will be major enough to reach replacement level.⁹⁷ Presenting various scenarios of immigration between the present and 2050, as well their results, it suggested replacement migration to Japan, but emphasized that it would require quite unlikely numbers if it should be the as the sole solution to the greying of Japanese society. According to the report, to avoid a decrease in population, Japan would need 17 million immigrants up to the year 2050 - an average of 381,000 immigrants per year between 2005 and 2050. Furthermore, to also keep 1995’s ratio (4.8) of working-age population to retired-age population by 2050, no less than 553 million immigrants would be needed 1995 through 2050 - an average of 10 million immigrants per year.⁹⁸

While the UN report made big headlines at the time, and had impact on policy documents and academic writings, it merely acted as an “unwelcome wake-up call, not a serious policy direction”⁹⁹, as academics as well as politicians considered replacement migration a too unrealistic option. Not all sectors of Japanese society showed the same reluctance, however: The powerful *Nippon Keidanren* (“Japan Business Federation”) in 2003, 2004 and 2007 released official papers

⁹⁴ More information about acquisition of Korean nationality can be found at <http://oneclick.law.go.kr/CSM/OvCnpRetrieveP.laf?csmSeq=505&ccfNo=2&cciNo=1&cnpClsNo=1> (last accessed: April 13, 2011).

⁹⁵ Tae-hoon Lee, *Dual Citizenship to be Allowed*, Korea Times Online, April 21, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jmDxUJ> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

⁹⁶ United Nations, *New Report on Replacement Migration Issued by UN Population Division*, United Nations Press Release, March 17, 2000, <http://bit.ly/iXowdP> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

⁹⁷ United Nations, *New Report on Replacement Migration Issued by UN Population Division*.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 770.

urging the government to accept non-Japanese workers in a greater scale.¹⁰⁰ In the 2007 edition, it was stated that it is “essential” to “admit more foreign workers”.¹⁰¹

Politicians skeptical to large-scale immigration commonly express fear that *masatsu* (friction) between different cultures will pose a threat to society. It appears taboo-ridden to speak of immigration as solution to *shōshika*, and vague ideas such as automatization of society¹⁰² and the introduction of robots¹⁰³ are more common. Former Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Prime Minister Shinzō Abe in his book *Utsukushii Kuni He* (“Towards a Beautiful Country”) expressed that he believed the future solution to *shōshika* will be changes in the pension system and advancement in medication for elders.¹⁰⁴ Various opinions on the immigration framework exist among academics, economic federations, government ministries and non-governmental organizations, but almost none of them consider immigration as a counter-measure to *shōshika*.¹⁰⁵ Consensus exists on the continuation of migration, but not on what sort of migrant workers, in what sort of occupations, and under what conditions.¹⁰⁶

Hidenori Sakanaka, former director of the Tokyo Immigration Bureau, and MOJ official from 1970 to 2005, claims that “the native Japanese have lived as a single ethnic group for nearly 1000 years and it will be a difficult task for them to build friendly relationships with other ethnic groups”¹⁰⁷, but stresses that the time has come to make a decision in regards to Japan’s future immigration policies, and personally does not appear to see any other option for the country’s future than a steady yearly increase in the number of foreigners:

¹⁰⁰ Nippon Keidanren, *Japan 2025: Envisioning a Vibrant, Attractive Nation in the 21st Century*, Nippon Keidanren, 2003, <http://bit.ly/ks2002> (last accessed: May 9, 2011); Nippon Keidanren, “Recommendations on Accepting Non-Japanese Workers”, Nippon Keidanren 2004, <http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/2004/029.html> (last accessed: March 9, 2011); Nippon Keidanren, “Second Set of Recommendations on Accepting Non-Japanese Workers”, Nippon Keidanren 2007, <http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/2007/017.html> (last accessed: March 9, 2011).

¹⁰¹ Nippon Keidanren, “Second Set of Recommendations on Accepting Non-Japanese Workers”, Nippon Keidanren 2007, <http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/2007/017.html> (last accessed: March 9, 2011).

¹⁰² Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, 3.

¹⁰³ Sütterlin, Sabine - Berlin-Institut: “Als Ausländer ist man in Japan nur Gast” , <http://bit.ly/ibyJcP> (last accessed April 14, 2011)

¹⁰⁴ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 772.

¹⁰⁵ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 770.

¹⁰⁶ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 771.

¹⁰⁷ Hidenori Sakanaka, *The Future of Japan’s Immigration Policy: a battle diary*, JapanFocus, 2002-2011, <http://bit.ly/g27C5m> (last accessed: April 22, 2011).

“During the Meiji Restoration¹⁰⁸ [...] fierce debate on whether to exclude or welcome foreigners divided the population. As Japan now faces another period of sweeping social change, the country must again profoundly discuss its future.”¹⁰⁹ (Hidenori Sakanaka)

Japan's economy needs immigrants, but the government continues to be reluctant, while the graveness of *shoushika* and *koureika* is intensifying. Japan's population is currently 127,370,000¹¹⁰ and falling, a quite unique situation considering it had been constantly growing from just 33 million in 1870 to its peak of 127,417,000 in 2005¹¹¹ - the first year that Japan experienced more deaths than births or immigrations.¹¹² 2005 was also the year that Japan's number of registered foreigners reached the two million mark, at 2,011,555 - a record 1.57 percent of Japan's total population.¹¹³

2.3 An overview of Japan's contemporary foreign residents

There are currently no more than 2,186,121 registered foreigners in Japan, meaning they constitute only 1.71 percent of Japan's total population.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, a large part are what is commonly referred to as ‘oldcomer’ immigrants, like *zainichi*, a majority of whom were born in Japan. 77.3 % of registered foreigners are originally from Asia, 15.6 % from South America, and different regions of the world make up the final 7.2 %. Currently, the majority of the registered foreigners from both Asia and South America, who together constitute 92.9 % of Japan's foreigners, are *ejjūsha* - “permanent residents” (among them, some are special permanent residents).¹¹⁵

Drastically increasing the number of foreigners to combat the challenges of *kōreika* and *shōshika* would be a big change for Japan, a country which does not only have a relatively limited history of immigration, but also has been developing policies to restrict rather than to encourage immigration into the country, and in addition has one of the lowest foreign population percentages

¹⁰⁸ The Meiji Restoration was a revolutionary modernization period of Japan, which led to enormous changes in Japan's political and social structure. The Meiji Period lasted from September 1868 through July 1912.

¹⁰⁹ Sakanaka, *The Future of Japan's Immigration Policy*.

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications: “Population Estimates”, published February 1, 2011, <http://bit.ly/f68UOD> (last accessed February 25, 2011).

¹¹¹ Japan National Institute of Population and Social Security Research: “Population Statistics of Japan 2008”: <http://www.ipss.go.jp/p-info/e/psj2008/PSJ2008.html> (last accessed October 29, 2010).

¹¹² Vogt, *Bevölkerungsentwicklung in Japan: Fokus Migration*.

¹¹³ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 768.

¹¹⁴ Ministry of Justice, *Heisei 21 nenmatsu genzai ni okeru gaikokujin tōrōkusha tokei ni tsuite*, published July 6, 2010 (report for 2009), retrieved from http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri04_00005.html (last accessed September 23, 2010).

¹¹⁵ Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*.

among the world's industrialized nations.¹¹⁶ Still, from 1980 to 2008 the number of registered foreigners in Japan increased every single year, foreigners making up 0.67 % of Japan's population in 1980, to the peak of 1.74 percent in 2008.¹¹⁷ Since this peak, one has seen a decrease, as the number of foreigners decreased by 31 305 from 2008 to 2009 - despite the UN's estimates of hundreds of thousands additional immigrants needed to be introduced every year.¹¹⁸

Although it arguably seems unlikely that Japan anytime soon will reach a number of yearly accepted entrants of that magnitude (see chapter 2.1), the current labor shortage does cause an expectancy of foreigners in Japan increasing.¹¹⁹ Onishi argues that these new immigrants are expected to come from an increasingly diverse number of countries, and their purposes and reasons for coming are expected to become increasingly diverse as well.¹²⁰ The most recent edition of the MOJ's Basic Plan For Immigration Control (March 2010) stresses the upcoming growth of Japan's foreign population, and that their activities currently are "becoming more diversified and with a growing trend of foreign nationals settling down in Japan".¹²¹ New foreigners are frequently dubbed 'newcomers'.

Oldcomers and newcomers

The term 'oldcomers' generally refers to *zainichi* Koreans,¹²² and more specifically to residents holding the status of 'special permanent residents' (see section 2.2). Koreans were the largest foreign minority group in Japan throughout the 20th century.¹²³ Second- and third-generation *zanichi* are known to have in many cases less attachment to their home country, and be fluent in the Japanese language, which often essentially is their mother tongue. 'Newcomer' foreign workers are usually either *nikkeijin* who arrived since 1990, trainees expected to stay in Japan for a limited time, or workers who entered Japan illegally or have overstayed the visa granted to them.

¹¹⁶ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, xiv.

¹¹⁷ Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim", 217.

¹²⁰ Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim".

¹²¹ Ministry of Justice, *Basic Plan for Immigration Control - Fourth Edition*, March 2010, http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/seisaku/keikaku_101006_english.pdf (last accessed November 10th, 2010).

¹²² Of course, not all Korean nationals in Japan today are oldcomers: When the South Korean government liberalized overseas travel in 1989, many young South Koreans in their 20s and 30s headed to Japan, attracted by higher wages and opportunities for studies. Some Koreans are thus definitely 'newcomers'. (See In-Jin Yoon, "The Korean Diaspora from Global Perspectives", *Japanese Studies Around the World*, Volume 12 (2006), Chapter 1).

¹²³ Koreans were recognized as foreigners after the Second World War, when Japan renounced its claim on the Korean peninsula and the Koreans still left in Japan lost the Japanese citizenship they had been holding during the colonial years. The number of Korean nationals in Japan stayed large until the beginning of the 1990s, but ever since, the number of *zainichi* of Korean nationality has been falling every year due to naturalization. In 2007, the Korean population in Japan was outnumbered by the Chinese.

Types of ‘newcomer’ immigrants in detail I: Unskilled labor immigrants

Among unskilled workers, the biggest group is the Chinese. But since the 1980s, new groups of immigrant workers from Asian countries outside East Asia, like Muslims from countries such as Indonesia, Iran, Bangladesh and Pakistan, have been introduced as well. These unskilled workers typically work in Japan’s industry, and usually in dying sectors.¹²⁴ Foreign unskilled workers of non-Japanese descent usually first come to Japan on limited-period visas for a number of different reasons, such as language teaching, art, religion, research, studying abroad at Japanese schools or universities, or attending trainee programs at Japanese companies.¹²⁵ When their visas expire, they voluntarily return home, are forced home, or overstay their visas, living as “illegals”.

Newcomer immigrants may apply for long-term residency or permanent residency, but the latter requires the applicant to have lived for a period in Japan, usually for ten years, and its granting is to the MOJ’s discretion.¹²⁶ Per MOJ statistics, there are 78,488 ‘illegal’ immigrants in Japan as of January 2011 - a relatively low number if compared to five years ago, when it was 193,745.¹²⁷ Foreigners found to be overstaying their visa are deported. Rare exceptions include instances when the MOJ discovered parents who had stable jobs and children who didn’t speak their native languages and were performing well in the Japanese school system.¹²⁸

Types of ‘newcomer’ immigrants in detail II: Female-dominated immigrant groups

Another major group of immigrants are the women from various Asian countries (such as China, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand) commonly dubbed ‘marriage migrants’.¹²⁹ In order to acknowledge their actual work and invaluable contribution to Japanese society, I like to refer to them as ‘unpaid’ worker immigrants. They typically come to the Japanese countryside to marry single agriculture workers, and certainly do their load of work on the farm, not to mention domestic work and the raising of children, but per official statistics they are not worker immigrants.

¹²⁴ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 30-31.

¹²⁵ Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*.

¹²⁶ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 766.

¹²⁷ Ministry of Justice, *Kokuseki (Shushshinchi) Betsu Danjo Betsu Fuhō-zairyusha kazu no sui-i*, Ministry of Justice, 2011, <http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000072624.pdf> (last accessed: April 9, 2011).

¹²⁸ Katsuo, as quoted in Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 768.

¹²⁹ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 35.

While some Japanese demographers argue that the shrinking of the Japanese population will open up more space, and make more land available for farming,¹³⁰ younger generations, especially females, are moving away from the countryside. Not wanting to take care of the family of a farmer husband in difficult rural conditions, females ‘escape’ to urban areas. Male farmers’ consequential struggle in finding spouses, and their tendency to ‘import’ spouses from abroad, is a situation recognized by Japanese officials: Municipal governments in afflicted areas have resorted to official countermeasures by arranging meetings with foreign women.¹³¹ These wives hold the status of *nihonjin no haigūsha*, or “spouses of Japanese nationals”, and their numbers are growing steadily: one out of eighteen marriages in Japan are to a foreign spouse, and 80 percent of these involve a Japanese man and a foreign woman.¹³² Another category of immigrants where women constitute the vast majority are those entering the country with *kougyō*, or “entertainment”, visa. The majority of the women in this category work as hostesses, where the work may involve prostitution.¹³³

Types of newcomer immigrants in detail III: Refugees

Among newcomer immigrants, there are next to no refugees, the reason being that Japan hardly accepts any: Between 1990 and 1999, Japan accepted only 49 refugees - a stunningly low number when compared to countries such as Germany and Canada, who accepted more than 100,000 refugees each in the same period.¹³⁴ Although Japan ratified the UN’s Refugee Convention in 1982, by 2008 only 330 out of 3,544 total applicants had been accepted.¹³⁵ In a regional context, however, these figures are less stunning: South Korea’s acceptance of refugees is equally low, the only exception being North Koreans. As the South Korean government allows North Koreans entry on humanitarian grounds, their numbers are increasing yearly. In 2009, no less than 2,297 North Koreans fled to the south.¹³⁶ The Japanese counterpart in the context of refugee acceptance is Myanmar: since 1998 a significant number of Burmese political asylum seekers have been

¹³⁰ Sütterlin, Sabine, *Als Ausländer ist man in Japan nur Gast*, Berlin-Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung, <http://bit.ly/ibyIcP> (last accessed April 14, 2011).

¹³¹ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 35.

¹³² Yamawaki, as quoted in Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 766.

¹³³ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*.

¹³⁴ Berlin-Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung, *Demos*, issue 44, November 6, 2007, <http://bit.ly/FTO9RG> (last accessed April 14, 2011).

¹³⁵ Meryll Dean, *JAPAN: REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS*, Report commissioned by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Protection Information Section (DIP), February 2006, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/43f4a4b94.pdf> (last accessed: February 7, 2011).

¹³⁶ The Korean Ministry of Unification, *North Korean refugees reached 20,000*, The Korean Ministry of Unification, November 22, 2010, <http://bit.ly/fHGLSZ> (last accessed: April 14, 2011).

accepted, with 117 authorized in the period, and another 139 given special permission to stay.¹³⁷

Accepted refugees, just like *nikkeijin*, enter Japan on long-term resident status.¹³⁸

Final chapter notes

As demonstrated in this chapter section, there is great variety among Japan's newcomer foreigners. These new immigrants currently seem to generally be perceived by the Japanese as only temporary guests. However, the 'oldcomer' *zainichi* were perceived the same way for a long time as well. Even after the Second World War, the general consensus among Japanese politicians was that the *zainichi* Koreans were a temporary existence, and that the goal should be to return them 'home'. But today, it is clear that the group did become quite permanent. Will today's 'newcomers' eventually reach the same level of permanency? If the 'newcomer' Muslims do choose to stay the same way *zainichi* did, what potential do these first-generation immigrants, and the emerging second-generation, have for leading peaceful and satisfactory lives as members of Japanese society? Going forward, I will take a closer look at the current situation of the 'newcomer' group foreign Muslims.

3. Situation of Muslims in Japan today

3.1 An overview of Japan's current foreign Muslim population

Muslim immigrants currently living in Japan are a relatively new group: The majority immigrated in the late 80s and early 90s, mainly for economic reasons.¹³⁹ During a period when Japan had visa waiver agreements with several Islamic countries and the economy was in dire need of laborers, they typically entered on short-term visas with the goal of doing blue collar work in Japan's industrial sector. Even today, Japan does not support regular labor immigration of unskilled workers.¹⁴⁰ Japan has also discontinued the visa waiver agreements it used to have with Islamic countries.

¹³⁷ N. Ganesan, *Myanmar: state, society and ethnicity* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007), 106.

¹³⁸ Roberts, "Immigration policy", 766.

¹³⁹ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

¹⁴⁰ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 28.

Number of Muslims

The Japanese government does not keep any statistics on the number of Muslims in Japan, as their laws serve to keep religion private.¹⁴¹ Neither the papers filled out at immigration offices nor the papers filled out to receive the Alien Registration Card at local municipal offices require applicants to provide any information about religious beliefs.¹⁴² Neither does the national census. Japan is a highly secularized nation, comparable to France: Like in France, a country founded on the principles of *laïcité* (“separation of church and state”) and freedom of speech, the state does not keep statistics on its citizens’ religious, ethnic or political affiliations. This is not to say the Japanese government doesn’t officially acknowledge the existence of Muslims in their country, however - a few mosques and Islamic associations have in fact been officially recognized by the government¹⁴³. While statistics from the Japanese government are effectively nonexistent, statistics published by religious groups have shown to be unreliable and unrealistically high, at times claiming up to 300,000 Muslims reside in Japan.¹⁴⁴ Thankfully, more reliable estimations have been done by academic researchers unrelated to both religious groups and the government.

Despite conditions making it nearly impossible to tally specific figures, in 2001 Sakurai made an elaborate estimation of the number of Muslims in Japan. First, she looked at the number of foreign nationals in Japan whose nationality was of one of the 57 member nations of the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference), assuming persons from those countries are very likely to be Muslim. Excluding short-term residents, they totaled in at 42,104.¹⁴⁵ She argued her estimation was only an approximate number, admitting that one can neither assume all nationals of those countries to be Muslims, nor ignore the fact that some nations with Muslim populations are not members - including China and India, two nationalities well represented in Japan but not commonly associated with Islam. Adding an estimated number of Muslims who overstay their visas, she ended up with the approximate number 63,552 foreign Muslims living in Japan at her time of writing.¹⁴⁶

More recently, in 2006 Kojima estimated the total Muslim population using a similar method. He started with the number of registered foreigners in Japan and multiplied the registered foreigners from each nation by the reported proportion of Muslims in that nation, reaching an

¹⁴¹ Michael Penn, “Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity”, *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 1 (Winter 2006).

¹⁴² Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 29.

¹⁴³ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

¹⁴⁴ Hiroshi Kojima, “Variations in Demographic Characteristics of Foreign ‘Muslim’ Population in Japan: A Preliminary Estimation”, *The Japanese Journal of Population*, Vol.4, No.1 (March 2006), <http://bit.ly/iriCJr> (last accessed: May 6, 2011).

¹⁴⁵ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 30. Sakurai takes the numbers of each nationality from the Ministry of Justice data on foreign residents in Japan of 2000, available at <http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/toukei/nyukoku/nen02.html>.

¹⁴⁶ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 34-36.

estimated number of Muslims in Japan counting 58,587.¹⁴⁷ In 2008, Akiko Onishi claimed that the number of people of Islamic faith in Japan was somewhere “between 70,000 and 100,000”, with “perhaps 10 percent” of these being Japanese citizens.¹⁴⁸ The Japan Times in November 2010 described the Muslim community of Japan as estimated to consist of “around 110,000 to 120,000” Muslims, with all but 10,000 of them being foreign, and emphasized the community as relatively small compared with those of the “United States, where 2.454 million reside, or Britain, with a community of 1.647 million Muslims”.¹⁴⁹ I choose to rely on Sakurai and Kojima’s refined methods of estimation, and will therefore throughout my thesis be relying on an approximation of 60,000 persons when referring to the population of foreign Muslims residing in Japan.

Countries of origin, age and employment

The grouping of foreign Muslims in Japan must take into account that the individuals that form the group constitute a variety of different nationalities and ethnicities from across the globe. From Southeast Asia, Indonesia is the most represented nationality, from South Asia (excluding India), the most represented are Bangladesh and Pakistan, from Central Asia and the Caucasus they are Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, from the Middle East they are Iran, Egypt and Turkey, and from Africa it is Nigeria.¹⁵⁰

Since Japan’s foreign Muslims originate from so many different countries, and also have other differentiating parameters such as ethnic and economic backgrounds, it can be difficult to discuss them as one group.¹⁵¹ Yet, certain nationalities have a dominating presence: Among foreign residents in Japan, the four biggest Muslim nationalities are Indonesian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Iranian.¹⁵² These four can be described as Muslim nationalities due to the four countries’ overwhelming majority of Muslim citizens: Muslims account for 86.1 % of the population of

¹⁴⁷ Kojima, “Variations in Demographic Characteristics of Foreign ‘Muslim’ Population in Japan”.

¹⁴⁸ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 217.

¹⁴⁹ Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

¹⁵⁰ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 38-39.

¹⁵¹ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

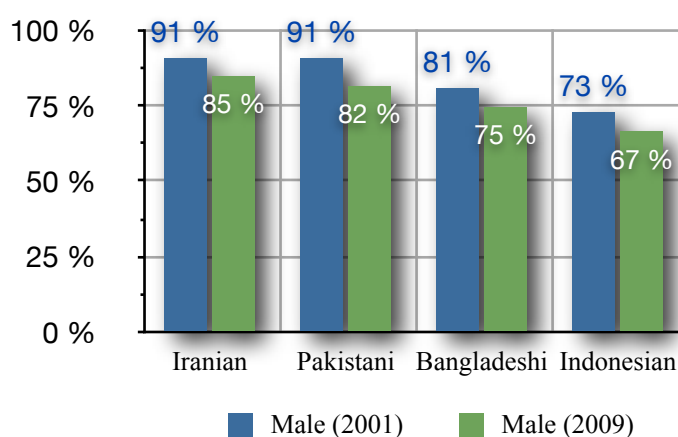
¹⁵² Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 39-40.

Indonesia, 95% of Pakistan, 89.5% of Bangladesh, and 98 % of Iran.¹⁵³ Going forward, I will present detailed information about the registered foreigners of these nationalities.¹⁵⁴

Indonesians constitute the largest segment of foreign Muslims in Japan, with 25,546 registered. The majority of them are high school graduates in their 20s or early 30s who came to Japan through trainee programs. Bangladeshis constitute the second-largest group, with 11,162 persons.¹⁵⁵ The majority of them are in their 30s or early 40s, and many originally came to Japan to pursue education, but gave up due to high costs and started working illegally. The majority are employed in manufacturing. Pakistanis are similar in number to those of Bangladeshi origin, totaling 10,295. The majority are in their 30s and 40s, and migrated abroad to escape unemployment and support their

families.¹⁵⁶ Pakistanis played an important role in the development of mosques in Japan, and today many are self-employed businessmen.¹⁵⁷ Iranians do not total more than 5,018, and the majority are in their 40s.¹⁷² They come from major cities, and mainly work in construction and small industries.¹⁷³

Chart A: Gender distribution for four target nationalities



As a general rule for immigrants in Japan, paid unskilled workers are typically male, while other groups, such as ‘unpaid’ workers (‘marriage migrants’) are female-dominated. Immigrants from Muslim countries almost exclusively came to Japan to do unskilled labor, and thus are almost exclusively male. Chart A illustrates the male to female distribution among the aforementioned four nationalities in 2001 and 2009.¹⁵⁸ As one can observe from the chart, males constitute the vast majority, but the male-to-female ratio in recent years has slightly evened out for all four nationalities, possibly suggesting a process of diversification.

¹⁵³ CIA, *The World Factbook - Indonesia*, CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/id.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011); CIA, *The World Factbook - Pakistan*, CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011); CIA, *The World Factbook - Bangladesh*, CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011); CIA, *The World Factbook - Iran*, CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011).

¹⁵⁴ Japan Immigration Association *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*

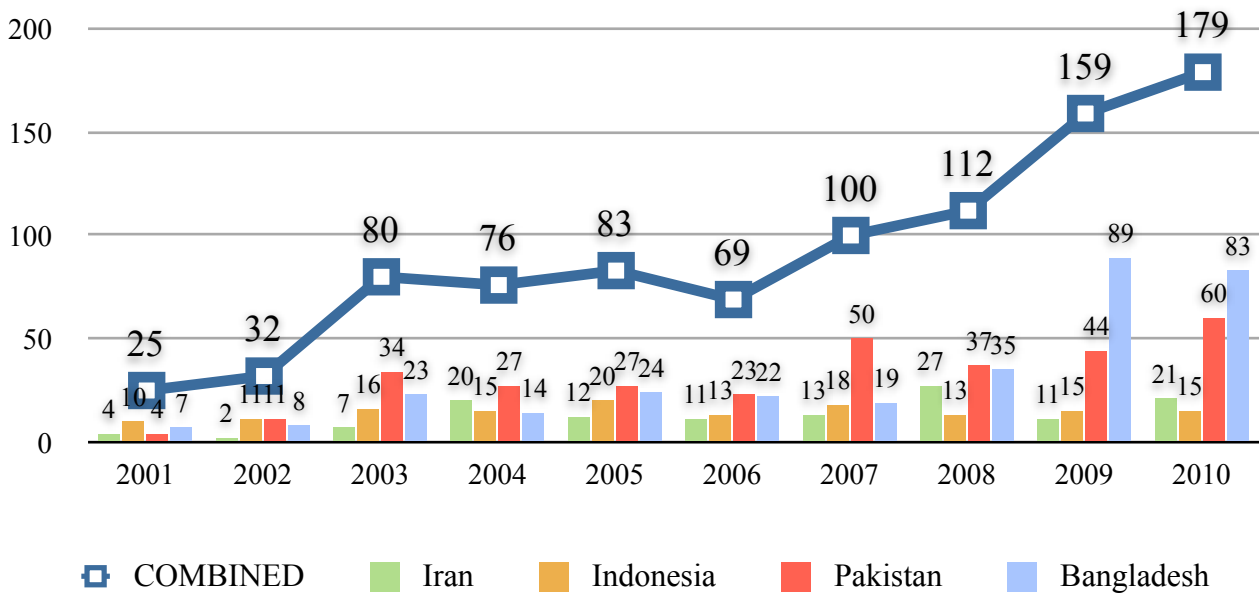
¹⁵⁵ Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*.

¹⁵⁶ Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*; Kojima, “Variations in Demographic Characteristics of Foreign ‘Muslim’ Population in Japan”.

¹⁵⁷ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

¹⁵⁸ 2009 numbers are from Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*. 2009 numbers are from Japan Immigration Association, *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei*.

Chart B: Naturalization numbers for four target nationalities



Naturalization

According to Sakurai, by the early 2000s the Muslim population had shrunk to less than half of what it had been at its peak in the early nineties, as the majority had returned home due to reasons such as the degeneration of the Japanese economy and strong sanctions against visa overstayers.¹⁵⁹ More recently, Tanada described Japan's Muslim population as "currently experiencing a slight decline" and cites the reason as workers returning to their home countries due to the economic downturn.¹⁶⁰ However, as described above, methods of counting Muslims in Japan are based on nationality rather than censuses inquiring religious faith.

Current researchers do not seem to take naturalization into account when they discuss the decrease of foreign nationals from Muslim countries residing in Japan. Statistics on the number of naturalizations to Japanese nationality by foreign nationals are readily available on the MOJ's website in the case of major foreign groups such as Chinese and Koreans, but data on nationals from Islamic countries is not offered. After e-mail correspondence with the MOJ, however, they were kind enough to provide me with data on my four nationalities of focus, which allowed me to compile Chart B.

The Y axis displays the number of individuals granted naturalization, while the X axis provides individual annual numbers for each nationality as well as a combined annual number for all four target nations. As one can observe from this chart, there has throughout the last decade been a consistent increase in the combined number of naturalizations. Yet, the total number in the past

¹⁵⁹ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*.

¹⁶⁰ Tanada, as quoted in Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

decade did not exceed 915 individuals, and as such the recent trend of naturalization should not be considered a hindrance for the legitimacy of the numbers presented in this chapter section.

3.2 Current trends in Japan's Muslim population

Settling down, marrying and acquiring legal status

Many of those who came on short-term visas worked illegally for extended periods, until eventually acquiring a legal status by marrying Japanese nationals.¹⁶¹ Upon the acquisition of legal status, many went on to transition from manual worker to self-employed business men.¹⁶² These self-employed workers operate businesses such as used-car dealerships and halal food stores.¹⁶³ Listings of Pakistani businessmen show that the majority of them are employed in use car dealerships (374), the second most common occupation being trade of Halal food (67).¹⁶⁴ In areas in with high concentration of foreigners, stores run by self-employed immigrants, along with restaurants and more, create an own economy of immigrants.¹⁶⁵ Like other immigrants who came to Japan in the 80s and 90s, an increasing number of Muslims are getting increasingly settled down in Japan, forming new households and raising new Japan-born generations.¹⁶⁶ This second-generation is very young, most of them not even teenagers yet.¹⁶⁷

Settling down: Muslim prayer facilities and associations

As Muslim immigrants are settling down in Japan to a greater degree than before, one noticeable effect has been the increase of mosques in Japan. Few Muslim praying facilities existed in Japan when the number of visa overstayers from Iran, Bangladesh and Pakistan peaked in 1992, but after many of the more temporary immigrants returned home, the ones left largely consisted of Muslim residents serious about settling down permanently, and this triggered the interest for a larger number

¹⁶¹ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Tanada, as quoted in Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*; Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*.

¹⁶⁴ Pakistani dot JP: "Directory of Pakistani Businessmen" <http://www.pakistani.jp/directory/index.html> (last accessed: April 15, 2011)

¹⁶⁵ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, 4

¹⁶⁶ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*; Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*.

¹⁶⁷ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

of facilities. The fact that many Muslim immigrants were becoming self-employed also made it financially possible to gather the funds to develop these facilities.¹⁶⁸

There has been a considerable increase in mosques in recent years: According to Penn, there were more than 20 mosques in Japan in 2006¹⁶⁹, according to Okai, at least 38 in 2007¹⁷⁰, and according to Tanada around 60 in November 2010. Tanada estimated that in addition to these permanent (open throughout the year) mosques, over 100 *musalla*, or temporary locations for prayers and gatherings, exist.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, there are Muslim student associations at certain universities¹⁷², and several different publications for Muslims are released in Japan.¹⁷³ In gathering places such as halal food shops and mosques, believers of various nationalities, ethnicities and mother tongues gather in a rather diverse environment. In the Nagoya Mosque, with its multinational clientele, English is the official language.¹⁷⁴

Besides being places of worships, mosques in Japan also take on the additional roles of places for gathering and exchanging information, for social or business gatherings, and ceremonies such as weddings or funerals, and some even provide overnight accommodations for weekend visitors. Buildings, factories and residences are often remodeled for use as mosques, which means they are hardly a clearly visible presence in Japan.¹⁷⁵ While there are very few eye-catching mosques, one exception can be found in the Tokyo Mosque, also known as the Tokyo Camii, in the sprawling area of Shibuya. Built in Ottoman architectural style, the building was completed as early as 1938. According to statements by Tokyo Camii, 400 to 500 Muslims of various nationalities regularly attend Friday noon prayers.¹⁷⁶

Mosques are widespread and very actively used in Japan, but nevertheless halal food stores outnumber mosques, and are the only place where absolutely any Muslim of any sect, ethnicity or nationality are guaranteed to gather regardless of background.¹⁷⁷ Having documented recent trends

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Penn, "Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity".

¹⁷⁰ Okai, as referenced in Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

¹⁷¹ Tanada, as quoted in Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

¹⁷² Penn, "Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity".

¹⁷³ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

¹⁷⁷ Penn, "Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity".

in the foreign Muslim population of Japan, I will now move on to some of the problems they are experiencing, and describe the specific hardships they are facing in their host society.

3.3 Problems for foreign Muslim workers

Muslim immigrants from countries such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Iran, like other immigrants in Japan, face number of difficulties in Japanese society. While they are not subject to violence and vandalism like they are in some countries in Europe - as Japan is a country of very little physical violence it provides a relatively safe nation to live in for minority groups who could usually fear physical threats¹⁷⁸ - they do struggle with discrimination and racism as well as misconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices held against them. Also, while I in the previous section described recent trends of many Muslim foreign workers becoming self-employed, the majority are still blue-collar workers in Japan's industrial sector, with all the difficulties that encompasses.

Labor issues

Foreign residents in Japan are often subject to social security problems, housing problems, and more.¹⁷⁹ Last but not least, their position in the labor market is troubled: Immigrants who come to work in Japan as 'trainees' through the official government 'trainee' program struggle with a number of basic rights. Japan annually imports approximately 90,000 'trainees'.¹⁸⁰ Shipper describes their working conditions as "slave-like", "working from 8:30 AM until midnight, being fined for bathroom breaks, having half of their pay being put into bank accounts they cannot access, and their passports taken away".¹⁸¹ Under such conditions, many of them give up their 'training' and find work as 'illegal' foreign workers, with wages usually twice as high as their 'trainee' allowance. Their status reduced to 'illegal' immigrant however, they lose even more rights.

Ever since the introduction of the program in 1981, 'trainees' struggled extensively from not being protected by labor laws due to being legally considered 'trainees', not workers. Since the MOJ's 2010 revision of the program, however, labor laws are finally to be applied to all 'trainees' from the very first year.¹⁸² This can be interpreted as a step towards the government admitting to the

¹⁷⁸ Michael Penn, "Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context", in "Roundtable. Islam in Japan: A Cause for Concern?", *Asia Policy*, Number 5 (January 2008) 61-104, <http://bit.ly/jY52OM> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

¹⁷⁹ Sakanaka, *The Future of Japan's Immigration Policy*.

¹⁸⁰ Kamata, Satoshi, *Japan's Internship Training Program for Foreign Workers: Education or Exploitation?*, Japan Focus, 2008, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Kamata-Satoshi/2820> (last accessed: April 27, 2011).

¹⁸¹ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 45.

¹⁸² The Immigration Bureau of Japan, *Revision of the Training and Technical Intern Training Programs*, The Immigration Bureau of Japan, 2009, http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/newimmiact/koumoku3_english.html (last accessed May 11, 2011).

trainee program being an official unskilled worker migration scheme. Also, the same year four Chinese ‘trainees’ were awarded more than ¥17 million in damages in a historic court case in Kumamoto Prefecture. The four’s working conditions had truly been “slave-like”, working from early morning to late evening with minimal pay and only two or three days off for four almost years.¹⁸³ Although official ‘trainees’ are now protected by labor laws, and increasing focus seems to be put on their rights, the ‘illegal’ immigrants are still in the same unfortunate position as before.

Most manual work performed by unskilled Muslim workers is technically not legal. When blue collar workers like Muslim immigrants are labeled as criminals by the authorities despite their contributions to society, a number of difficulties arise. First, they are frequently subject to human rights violations, but are not protected from them by law. Because of their status they cannot appeal these violations to government bodies, since all civil servants working there are required by law to report ‘illegal’ residents to the Immigration Bureau, who consequently deport them. Also, for the same reason, all undocumented foreigners working in dangerous "3K jobs" cannot benefit from the Worker’s Accident Compensation Insurance Law when injured at work.¹⁸⁴

Other problems they face due to their marginal status at their workplace includes receiving unfairly low wages compared to their Japanese counterparts, or not receiving wages at all¹⁸⁵, as well as always being the first to be fired under layoffs.¹⁸⁶ It is difficult for them to find work on their own, so they become reliant on brokers, who are organized and take unreasonable fees.¹⁸⁷ Recruitment of undocumented foreigners is turning increasingly sophisticated, with Japanese *yakuza* as well foreign crime syndicates involved.¹⁸⁸ Komai argues that the situation for undocumented workers is even worse if they are easily detectable by looks.¹⁸⁹ Those from countries like China can wander around in public less anxious, but those from countries like Iran, Pakistan and Bangladesh fear detection and deportation at all times because of their noticeability.

A few of them have attempted to do something about their ‘illegal’ status. In 1999, a group of undocumented Iranian overstayers, after living almost ten years in Japan, successfully appealed to the Tokyo Immigration Office for permission to legally reside in the country. In 2000, some of them

¹⁸³ Kyodo News, *Foreigners win ¥17 million for trainee abuses*, The Japan Times Online, January 30, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/n20100130b2.html> (last accessed May 8, 2011).

¹⁸⁴ Komai, *Migrant workers in Japan*, 11.

¹⁸⁵ Komai, *Migrant workers in Japan*, 12.

¹⁸⁶ Hiroshi Matsubara, *Economic gloom just adds to illegal workers’ plight*, The Japan Times Online, June 27, 2002, <http://bit.ly/ggftpd> (last accessed March 23, 2011).

¹⁸⁷ Komai, *Migrant workers in Japan*, 14.

¹⁸⁸ Cornelius et al, as referenced in Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, 10.

¹⁸⁹ Komai, *Migrant workers in Japan*, 19.

had their wish granted, a first for immigrants without Japanese family.¹⁹⁰ In 2009, another Iranian immigrant family appealed to the supreme court after the Tokyo Immigration Office had denied them visas and announced deportation, and the Tokyo High Court had rejected their request to terminate the deportation.¹⁹¹

Various activist groups also criticize today's situation. Many citizen groups are working towards improving living and working conditions for foreign residents, lobbying the government for a *tabunka kyōsei shakai* ("Society of Multicultural Coexistence") and challenging current immigration policy framework.¹⁹² Since 2002, several labor unions especially for foreign workers have been established.¹⁹³ From 2005 to 2010, the union Nambu Foreign Workers Caucus¹⁹⁴ together with other groups arranged a yearly "March in March" demonstration to encourage the government to take their concerns seriously. In 2010's successful event, around four hundred of participants demanded better working conditions and employment benefits for foreign residents, stressing their need for job security and health care.¹⁹⁵ Participants also complained about the tendency of companies hiring foreigners as temporary workers, in a 'use and discard' fashion.¹⁹⁶

3.4 Acculturation issues

Research indicates that foreign Muslim workers often, in their workplace or in society in general, feel pressured to suppress or discard their original culture, and assimilate to Japanese culture. Onishi describes Japan's social context as "relatively monocultural", with a "prevailing ideology of assimilation". In her interviews with Muslim manual workers, she discovered that many of the interview subjects felt that they were being pressured to assimilate to Japanese culture, and that this was a requirement for acceptance in Japan.¹⁹⁷

The term assimilation evokes negative sentiments for many, as it is commonly associated with a top-down approach of forcing humans to change. Martellone, discussing assimilation in the United States, argues that it does not necessarily imply coercion - which is only ever needed during

¹⁹⁰ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, xviii.

¹⁹¹ Chibatopi, *Zairyu Mitomerarezu Tōgane no Iran-jin Ikka 'Nihon de Kurashitai'*, March 27, 2009, Chibatopi, <http://bit.ly/xw0L4> (last accessed: March 4, 2011).

¹⁹² Roberts, "Immigration policy", 773.

¹⁹³ Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, xix.

¹⁹⁴ Nambu Foreign Workers Caucus, *About Nambu FWC*, Nambu Foreign Workers Caucus, 2010, <http://nambufwc.org/about/> (last accessed May 10, 2011).

¹⁹⁵ In 2011, due to the splitting of the union, there unfortunately was none.

¹⁹⁶ Nagata, Kazuaki, *Foreigners rally over job security*, The Japan Times Online, February 24, 2011, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100308a2.html> (last accessed May 11, 2011).

¹⁹⁷ Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim".

times of national crisis, when the nation is in need of patriotism - but rather encompasses a spontaneous and “organic” result of a “long, slow process which occurs and perfects itself over a period of several generations”.¹⁹⁸ While this may be true of the US, arguably the first country to experience the process of assimilation of foreign nationals in its modern form, the problem of assimilation pressure the way it is applied today in East Asian countries like Japan, but also certain European nations, is that the nation does not simply expect an intergenerational assimilation of its new citizens, but an intragenerational and arguably unrealistically rapid assimilation process.

Martellone furthermore criticizes judgmental views of assimilation in all its forms being nothing but domestic imperialism, considering the immigrants in many cases in the US themselves wished to “become Americans”.¹⁹⁹ While this may be true, a strong desire to discard one’s own cultural identity in favor of an American one may be a symptom of unequal power relations, and unfavorable social status determined by cultural background. In other words, more than a voluntary decision out of personal preference, it may be a decision motivated by the experience of marginalization and discrimination in one’s new home country, or a feeling of inferiority connected to a deeper-laying notion of one’s culture being considered lower in a global hierarchy of cultures, triggering a desire to ascend upwards in this hierarchy.

Comparing to Japan’s case, it indeed often is the case that Asian immigrants do desire to ‘become Japanese’, and the assimilation in these cases doesn’t spring out of a top-down enforcement, but a voluntary effort. This is however a symptom of a tendency both within Japan, and in other Asian nations, to consider Japan’s culture ‘better’, or more ‘modern’ than other Asian cultures, only below Western cultures. In Japan, attitudes toward foreigners from less developed countries may often be more negative than those toward foreigners from Western industrially developed countries.²⁰⁰ In the countries that were subject to Japanese aggression or colonization during World War Two, one can sense a coexistence of two complexes: Inferiority complex towards Japan and victim’s complex.

Michael Penn of The Shingetsu Institute for the Study of Japanese-Islamic Relations argues that an individual Muslim who “plays by the rules” - i.e. makes an effort to respect Japanese culture and learn the local language, “may do very well in Japan”²⁰¹ - but that things might go wrong once he fails to do so. As one example, he tells the story of a manufacturing plant in Western Japan

¹⁹⁸ Martellone, “National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States”, 11.

¹⁹⁹ Martellone, “National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States”, 18.

²⁰⁰ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 221.

²⁰¹ Penn, “Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity”.

where the boss fired a Filipino Muslim who had taken too many breaks to pray, as well as requested to do lighter work during the month of Ramadan. The same boss later employed a Turkish Muslim, but only after this new employee had made it clear that he was a secularized Muslim who did not pray every day or fast for Ramadan. Being fired for practicing religious beliefs would have been ground for a lawsuit in multicultural societies such as the United States, where religious discrimination is not accepted. In Japan, however, where “group-differentiated rights” are not developed in the same way, employers might very well fail to see why one employee should be granted more breaks than others. Penn describes this boss as having “inflexible Japanese cultural expectations”²⁰² rather than prejudice.

While Penn’s argument may be true in many cases, trying to find the general opinion of Japanese employers from one company boss is not very fruitful. In fact, Sakurai paints an entirely different picture. She argues that when a foreign Muslim workers asks his or her boss for permission to perform prayers during the workday, or to wear a veil at work, permission might very well be granted “because of being ‘a foreigner’” - while an ‘ethnic Japanese’ Muslim might be negatively perceived making these demands “despite being Japanese”.²⁰³ While in fact being religious duties of Islam, these activities are rather viewed as “foreign customs and culture” by Japanese employers,²⁰⁴ who are not legally required to allow their workers to pray, but often may do so out of courtesy.²⁰⁵ Arguably, as Japan prides itself on national cohesion through discourses of cultural homogeneity, the foreign ‘other’ is also expected to have a number of deep-rooted cultural practices.

Nevertheless, there is a clear tendency of blue collar immigrant Muslim workers feeling a pressure to assimilate to Japanese culture, in a way that white collar immigrants from the West do not. In trying to understanding the assimilation pressure that the Muslims in Onishi’s and Penn’s examples are facing, it may be argued that this might be related to Japanese mainstream society considering their cultures hierarchically below the Western and Japanese ones, commonly ranked as the first and second most ‘modern’ cultures respectively in Japanese modernity discourse (see also Chapter 4). Muslims are in this way encouraged to ascend upwards in the hierarchy of cultures to attain Japanese culture.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 221.

²⁰⁴ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 221.

²⁰⁵ Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

Assimilation pressure directed towards religious minorities does not always stem from employers or fellow citizens, as it also may be directed from the state: In some cases, state laws may actively place constraints on certain groups. There has recently been an upswing in these kinds of cases in Europe, such as the French state banning religious dress in public schools. For French female Muslim pupils wishing to wear *hijab* headscarves to school, the law is quite problematic, and a good example of rather harsh assimilation pressure from behalf of the state.²⁰⁶

In Japan however, it is not likely that such policies will be introduced in the near future. Assimilation pressure is likely to continue to stem from in-group members around them, including co-workers or employers, rather than from the state. But do the Muslims eventually assimilate? Onishi, employing Berry's concept of four strategies for acculturation, in her qualitative study of Iranian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani foreign workers found that they chose assimilation, separation or marginalization, but never integration.²⁰⁷ Integration can be called a 'median' option, being neither assimilation nor blind preservation of the original identity.

If continuing the path of expecting cultural assimilation from immigrants, Japan is in dire need of improving its "structural assimilation" of immigrants, to to use Gordon's²⁰⁸ term. Complete cultural assimilation is however an unrealistic goal in the migration situation of the twenty-first century. Arguably, it is highly unlikely that the newcomer immigrants like Muslim workers will ever assimilate to mainstream culture to the degree that oldcomer 'foreign' minorities to Japan did - first the *ryukyu* and *ainu*, then colonial subjects like the *zanichi* - even if given the same amount of time. Not simply because newcomers like Muslims are culturally further from Japan, or more different in their looks and behavior, but because the era of their arrival in Japan is such a vastly different era, that offers a substantially different situation for immigrants, and opportunities for transnational identities.

Increasing ties to home country

In her qualitative research on Muslim immigrant workers in Japan, Onishi found that many of them developed a stronger Muslim identity or faith after having stayed in Japan for some time. She argues that they did this to regain some sense of control over their lives, and to relieve stress by leaving their destiny in the hands of God while just doing their best in an everyday life filled with

²⁰⁶ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Multiculturalism*.

²⁰⁷ Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim", 220.

²⁰⁸ Gordon, as quoted in Pedraza, "Assimilation or Transnationalism?", 41.

challenges such as prejudice and discrimination.²⁰⁹ She argues that when faced with discrimination and when failing to make Japanese friends, Muslim immigrants give up on becoming integrated, and turn to religion and/or stronger ties to their original country or culture. Recently there has also been a trend of male Muslim immigrants married to Japanese women sending their half-Japanese children 'back' to the Islamic world, for boarding school, so they can receive an Islamic education instead of the standard Japanese one.²¹⁰ Many Pakistani families send their children to Pakistan to live with their grandparents and attend school there.²¹¹ This can in the same way be interpreted as reacting to failed acceptance in the host society with giving up on it and facing homewards again.

Long-Distance Nationalism and Transnational identities

Gross argues that in democratic multi-ethnic states, citizens carry at least two identities - universal and particular, the latter usually taking the form of ethnic identity.²¹² Similarly, citizens of modern multiethnic states may also hold two national identities, or strong ties to more than just one nation. This tendency can take various forms. One difference between Japan's oldcomer immigrants and newcomer immigrants is that the latter in their initial stages of settlement in Japan have a much better chance of keeping strong two-way ties to their country of origin, and to some degree still be present - while physically existing in Japan.

Many social scientists at the end of the 20th century noticed that due to the improvement in modern communication and transportation, immigrants developed bicultural identities rather than completely assimilating. Indeed, the development of ever faster and cheaper transportation, notably modern jet air travel, and modern communication - satellite television for once, and more recently the Internet and its endless possibilities (and constant advancement) for human interaction including two-way live video conferences, makes it much easier for today's immigrants to be in constant and close contact with the people and society they left behind. Today's immigrants can regularly participate "economically, politically, socially and emotionally"²¹³ in their home society, and develop a personal identity that incorporates two home nations simultaneously.

Benedict Anderson predicted this development in the chapter "Long-Distance nationalism" of his 1998 work *Spectre of comparisons*, arguing that while the world in modern time has steadily disintegrated with the formation of more and more new independent nation states in favor of vast

²⁰⁹ Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim", 229-230.

²¹⁰ Yasunori Kawakami, *Local Mosques and the Lives of Muslims in Japan*, JapanFocus, 2007, <http://bit.ly/iEbCES> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

²¹¹ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

²¹² Gross, as quoted in Prato, "Introduction - Beyond Multiculturalism"

²¹³ Pedraza, "Assimilation or Transnationalism?", 47.

empires, it simultaneously also has become more and more integrated due to the advances of capitalism, and the rapid development of new means of transportation and communication since the 1930s, including commercial aviation, radio, telephone, television and computers.²¹⁴ While an increasing proportion of the world's population lives marginalized in poverty, the wealthy core is closer to these poor than ever before²¹⁵ - just a short plane ride away, or right in front of them on the TV or computer screen.

Anderson argues that the development of the multicultural capitalist nation state has transformed the meaning of citizenship, and the implications of possessing a certain country's passport have changed substantially since their introduction as identity proofs: Nowadays, they don't tell us much about loyalty, but simply about where their holders might be able to seek jobs²¹⁶. In Anderson's view, one can notice a trend of "ethnicization of political life in wealthy, postindustrial states"²¹⁷ that is causing their wealthy residents to financially support political movements in their home countries, in what he dubs long-distance nationalism. Through today's convenient means of communication, expatriates can keep much closer involvement with their home country, and sit "safely positioned in the First World"²¹⁸ while influencing a country to which they do not pay taxes, and whose legal prosecution they do not need to fear.

The lack of "structural assimilation" of foreigners in Japan can potentially lead to seclusion from society and long-distance nationalism. Foreigners face problems participating in Japan's political life, and reasons include lack of policies to actively integrate them into society, and institutional hindrances.²¹⁹ As foreigners cannot vote or run for public office, and are unable to become members in local welfare or human rights commissions and more, the political focus of most immigrants and their associations turns to long-distance nationalism.²²⁰

Looking at Japan's oldest foreign minority, the situation of *zainichi* Koreans in is complicated both by discrimination and by long-distance nationalism. As with other foreign minorities in Japan, like unskilled labor immigrants, those who remain South or North Korean nationals face problems with lack of basic citizen rights, such as health care, equal education opportunities and the right to participate in the democratic process. The at times high loyalty to North Korea held by minority

²¹⁴ Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of comparisons* (London and New York: Verso, 1998), 59-66.

²¹⁵ Anderson, *The Spectre of comparisons*, 67.

²¹⁶ Anderson, *The Spectre of comparisons*, 70.

²¹⁷ Anderson, *The Spectre of comparisons*, 73.

²¹⁸ Anderson, *The Spectre of comparisons*, 74.

²¹⁹ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 68.

²²⁰ Ibid.

parts of the *zainichi* Koreans in Japan has been a source for controversy in Japanese society. North Korean citizens of Japan, who typically have never set their foot inside the state of North Korea, and simply are descendants of Koreans who came to Japan during the colonial era and later decided on holding North Korean nationality upon the division of their home country into the two conflicting regimes, might send money contributions or other forms of contributions towards Pyongyang.

A few Japan-born North Koreans visit Pyongyang through field trips if they're enrolled to special North Korean ethnic high schools²²¹, but only a few of them get the chance to experience this.²²² In April 2010, former Minister of Justice Hiroshi Nakai of the DPJ stated that the Japan-born Korean students attending these Pyongyang-affiliated schools were brainwashed with classes on the North Korean ideologic concepts of *juche* (self-reliance) and *songun* (putting the military first).²²³ Shipper mentions one such Japan-born North Korean as an example of Long-Distance Nationalism in Japan.²²⁴ The second-generation Japan-born Moo Se Kwang in 1974 assassinated South Korea's first lady on North Korea's behalf. It was claimed by the government of South Korea that the president himself was the intended target of the assassin, who they claimed had been trained by special North Korean agents in Japan. Shipper argues that many overseas Asians in Japan, and their ethnic associations, identify with the culture, ideology, and in many cases even the politics of an experienced or imagined home country, although he admits the example of Moo is an extreme case.

While holding such extreme forms of loyalty towards North Korea is rather uncommon, it is not unusual for *zainichi* residents to feel close ties to their largely imagined home in the Korean Peninsula, due to discrimination in Japanese society. Until 1979, pensions were denied to Korean citizens by the Japanese state, but this was changed due to outside intervention in the form of Japan ratifying UN conventions obligating the state to remove the nationality clause from the national pension law.²²⁵ In 1987, the South Korea-affiliated *zainichi* Korean organization *Mindan* protested on what they saw as a contradiction between the lack of right to political representation and the obligation to pay taxes as residents of Japan.²²⁶ The Supreme Court in 1995 stated that local voting rights for foreigners did not violate the constitution. Still, long-term foreign residents, permanent

²²¹ Yasunori Fukuoka, *Lives of Young Koreans in Japan* (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2000), 305.

²²² Also, since the late 1970s, more than 80 % of all school-aged Koreans in Japan attend regular Japanese schools. See Miyawaki, as referenced in Kaori Okano, *Third-Generation Koreans' Entry into the Workforce in Japan*, La Troupe University, January 8, 2008, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1525/aeq.1997.28.4.524/pdf> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).

²²³ Kyodo News, *At North-linked schools, kids get brainwashed, Nakai asserts*, April 27, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jjLGsi> (last accessed May 9, 2011)

²²⁴ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 68.

²²⁵ Weiner, Michael (ed.): *Japan's minorities: the illusion of homogeneity* (New York & London: Routledge, 2000).

²²⁶ Weiner (ed): *Japan's minorities: the illusion of homogeneity*.

residents and special permanent residents currently do not have the right to suffrage or political representation in most prefectures.

Foreign residents in Japan displaying allegiance to foreign nations, and participating in foreign politics, like some Pyongyang-linked *zainichi* do, is regarded a major concern by right-wing politicians. However, the same politicians also complain about how wrong it would be for foreign residents to be able to participate in domestic politics. When the ruling center-left DPJ in the spring of 2010 discussed their leniency towards submitting a bill to the Diet granting local election rights to foreign residents, the center-right opposition LDP protested furiously.²²⁷ Foreign residents' possibilities to influence Japanese politics are extremely limited, as even donations made by foreign nationals to Japanese politicians are illegal - Something the public was reminded of in March 2011, when the discovery of a donation made by a *zainichi* Korean to foreign minister Maehara led to a major scandal and his resignation.²²⁸ The 72-year old woman has stated to the press that she didn't know she was doing anything illegal, and this was money she by her own accord decided to donate.²²⁹ Having no way to influence Japanese politics, foreigners' political involvement surely must turn elsewhere as a consequence?

Either way, a high-level "structural assimilation" will make it unlikely that the descendants of immigrants will choose to maintain such tight bonds with a country they were not born in. Young descendants of Koreans in Japan generally feel a weak connection to Korea compared to their parents, not having close friends or relatives there. They attend Japanese schools, have Japanese friends, and participate in Japanese youth culture, and speak better Japanese than Korean - the latter of which some of them don't have any proficiency in whatsoever. Yasunori Fukuoka's qualitative research on young Koreans in Japan unveil a complex identity different from both Korean nationals in Korea and majority Japanese.²³⁰ Sakurai argues that because the second generation of Muslim immigrants in Japan - who are yet to become adults for quite a few more years - are unlikely to take collective action, being too ethnically and geographically divided.²³¹ Growing up spread across Japan, and being part of a very weakly organized minority, issues of Long-Distance nationalism and radicalization among young Muslims in Japan is not likely to become a problem.

²²⁷ Alex Martin, *Foreigner suffrage opponents rally*, The Japan Times Online, April 18, 2010, <http://bit.ly/mQjPBX> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

²²⁸ Al Jazeera and agencies, *Japan's foreign minister resigns*, March 6, 2011, <http://bit.ly/lk9FBQ> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

²²⁹ Mariko Sanchanta, *Maehara Gaishō wo Jinin ni oikonda niman-en no kenkin*, Japan Real Time, The Wall Street Journal. March 7, 2011, <http://on.wsj.com/eH5wkY> (last accessed: March 7, 2011).

²³⁰ Fukuoka, *Lives of Young Koreans in Japan*.

²³¹ Keiko Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan", in "Roundtable. Islam in Japan: A Cause for Concern?", *Asia Policy*, Number 5 (January 2008) 61-104, <http://bit.ly/jY52OM> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

Even with more and more ways to maintain strong contact with one's country of origin, and more frequent travels 'back home' to this country, new generations of immigrant descendants born on Japanese soil may still be likely to feel most of all connected to Japan, the country they grew up in and have the most social and emotional investment in. Arguably, by granting local election rights to foreign nationals in all prefectures, their political involvement is also unlikely to turn to radicalism or long-distance nationalism. By structurally assimilating these new generations of Japan-born minorities, and including them into all of society's major institutions, not only will Japan surely experience new generations of minorities with strong ties to Japan, the country is also likely to experience a reduction of prejudice directed towards these minority groups.

3.5 The emerging underclass and need for changes in the educational system

Recently, cities with large settlements of foreigners are experiencing an unfortunate ever-increasing separation of foreign and Japanese nationals. Hamamatsu City in Shizuoka Prefecture has about 30,000 foreign residents, out of the about 800,000 total residents. This makes for four percent of the total population, which is twice the national average. The number of them increased in particular with the inflow of *nikkeijin* starting in 1990. The Japan Times in the spring of 2010 reported that the city's foreign residents live separated from 'ethnic Japanese', and their children are poorly integrated into society: With low Japanese language skills, only about half of them attend high school, causing a formation of what the article writer chooses to describe as "an alienated and undereducated underclass".²³² Education for migrant children is not compulsory in Japan, although it is currently being discussed.²³³

On a positive note, the article describes the success of a non-profit organization, the Hamamatsu NPO Network Center, in motivating these immigrant children to go to school, as well as translating information handbooks to five different languages. The group has as of late started to become recognized by the prefectural government, and early 2010 it received the Japan Foundation's Global Citizenship Award. Another Japan Times article cited Japan-born Kim Bung Ang of the Korea NGO Center, who pointed to schools in the US where Spanish or Portuguese is used alongside English, and suggested that areas in Japan with high concentration of Brazilian

²³² Natsuko Fukue, *Nonprofit brings together foreign, Japanese residents in Hamamatsu*, The Japan Times Online, March 13, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100313f1.html> (last accessed February 24, 2011).

²³³ Gabriele Vogt and Glenda S. Roberts, *Migration and Integration - Japan in Comparative Perspective* (München: iudicium, 2011), 10.

nationals should have bilingual elementary and secondary schools teaching both Portuguese and Japanese - to Japanese as well as the *nikkeijin* children.²³⁴

Martellone, discussing this recent US trend, views the “right to bilingualism” that for example Hispanics claim as a threat to the traditional concept of national unity based on common language and institutions, and imagines granting one ethnic group this privilege will make others follow.²³⁵ Activists like Kim meet many critical Japanese voices similar to Martellone’s in Japan, yet in 2004 the government officially recognized the first multilingual school for *nikkeijin*, Mundo de Alegria in Hamamatsu. The school offers education from elementary through high school, and graduates can go on to university education in Japan or Spanish or Portuguese speaking countries.²³⁶

Sakurai considers it unlikely that Islamic ethnic schools could open for the children of Muslim immigrants: While Christian schools presently exist, and are even attended by non-believing ‘ethnic Japanese’, Christianity is considered a cornerstone of the Western culture that Japan modeled itself after during its modernization process, while Islam on the other hand suffers from the image of a “backward” third world religion.²³⁷ Parents of Muslim schoolchildren have however showed dissatisfaction with Japanese public schools, and points of concern include the food served in school cafeterias as well as the joint physical education. Consequently, more affluent families actually send their children to the Christian schools, believing these are more likely to respect religion.²³⁸ Some Islamic groups have attempted to found Islamic schools, and the Indonesian and Iranian embassies have actually established schools for the children of nationals, providing teaching in accordance with their respective national education programs.²³⁹ Nevertheless, since Muslim immigrants are a small minority spread all across Japan, and a linguistically heterogeneous group, it will in most cases be hard for them to send their children to schools designed especially for their needs.

In order to avoid that their children will grow to “an alienated and undereducated underclass”, then, one must rather count on the public Japanese school system to develop policies that better accommodate immigrant children, such as additional and intensive language classes for Japanese as a foreign language. The experience and insight of organizations such as the Hamamatsu

²³⁴ Kyodo News: *Yearning for multiculturalism*.

²³⁵ Martellone, “National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States”, 20.

²³⁶ *Gakkō Hōjin Mundo de Alegria*, <http://www.mundodealegria.org> (last accessed May 8, 2011)

²³⁷ Sakurai, *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*, 221.

²³⁸ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

²³⁹ Ibid.

NPO Network Center and the Korea NGO Center would be invaluable in the institutional development of a more multicultural Japan. They advocate what Kymlicka calls individual-level “group-differentiated rights”²⁴⁰, accommodation or assistance in matters where the majority does not need assistance or accommodation: being accommodated in schools or in voting by offering information in more languages, or receive funding for minority language schools and ethnic associations. Should the work and insight of such organizations be broadly acknowledged by politicians on both a regional and national level, and eventually used as a model or inspiration in the development of central-government policies, there should surely be opportunities for significantly improving the current situation of immigrants, as well as preventing the formation of ‘underclasses’ as Japan’s immigrant population continues to grow.

Yet, in a 2001 survey, only 16 percent of Japanese respondents agreed to that Japan should grant visas to unskilled foreign workers²⁴¹, and in late 2010, the think tank Japan Forum on International Relations submitted a report signed by 87 prominent politicians, scholars, business leaders and former diplomats to the government, advising the government not only against increasing any immigration but skilled worker immigration, but also against letting Japanese language instruction to foreigners become any major financial burden, suggesting one should rather make sure that the foreigners are proficient in Japanese before they enter country.²⁴² The think tank expressed opposition to long-term residency for foreigners, and consequentially completely ignored the new challenges that occur when foreigners settle in Japan and raise their children in the country. As we can see in Hamamatsu’s case however, it has already become a reality. The government can choose to close its eyes to the reality and follow the think tank’s suggestion, or accept that the teaching of Japanese to new generations of Japan-born foreign residents is an expense that is an absolute necessity.

Similarly, in Germany’s early years of accepting labor migration in the 1950s, the temporary ‘guest’ workers, *Gastarbeiter*, and their children were expected to eventually return home. In fact, as each *Gastarbeiter* originally had to return home after two years, their Germany-born children were expected to become two years old at most, and debate advocating initiatives to ensure this second generation learnt the German language was consequentially non-existent.²⁴³ However, as these immigrants eventually settled down permanently after all, efforts to accommodate immigrant

²⁴⁰ Kymlicka, as quoted in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, *Multiculturalism*.

²⁴¹ Matsubara, as quoted in Roberts and Douglass (ed): *Japan and Global Migration*, xvii.

²⁴² Takahiro Fukada, *Selective Immigration for highly skilled urged*, The Japan Times Online, November 25, 2010. <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101125f1.html> (last accessed: February 25, 2011).

²⁴³ Ulrich Exner, *CDU dankt Türken dafür, dass sie geblieben sind*, Welt Online, March 29, 2011, <http://bit.ly/gSLB4j> (last accessed April 15, 2011)

children in schools began in the 1970s.²⁴⁴ In present-day Germany, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research has proposed ideas of ‘whole-day schools’ teaching immigrant children the German language thoroughly, in a way that schooldays of conventional length are not able to provide.²⁴⁵

The aforementioned tendency of Muslim immigrants sending their children ‘back’ to the Islamic world to receive an Islamic education instead of the standard Japanese one, can on the one hand be interpreted as them reacting to failed inclusion into Japanese society by turning their backs to Japanese society. On the other hand, it can be interpreted as immigrants who once imagined themselves permanently settling down in Japan, start succumbing to Japanese politicians’ demand of ‘temporality’ once they have children. Professor Angelo Ishi at the Musahi University in Tokyo, third-generation Japanese-Brazilian born in Brazil and resident of Japan since 1990, in an interview with the Japan Times stated that many *nikkeijin* residents feel that they would like to return to Brazil eventually, “as they couldn’t secure a place where they truly feel at home in Japan”.²⁴⁶ If first-generation immigrants still feel like guests and not temporary residents even after giving birth to second-generation immigrants on Japanese soil, do they simply not bother to have their children be raised with a Japanese education, expecting them to not lead their adult life in Japan anyway?

The government arguably does not only need to accommodate immigrant children in their public schools, but they also needs to actively combat discrimination of minority groups, and change attitudes towards foreigners and other minorities, starting with campaigns in schools. In October 2010, the government learned the hard way that it is necessary, when a twelve year old schoolgirl in Gunma Prefecture committed suicide after a long period of bullying. The girl had for a long time been bullied by classmates for being half foreign, after a visit to the school by her mother from the Philippines.²⁴⁷ The following month, the government responded by having the education ministry conducting a nationwide survey of bullying in schools. Although this was a much needed undertaking, it is evident that the government also should focus on spreading positive attitudes towards immigrant groups and different cultural or ethnic groups in the school system, starting with elementary school. The education system should stop presenting children with images of a homogenous Japanese society, but rather prepare the next generation of Japanese for the future

²⁴⁴ Ingrid Gogolin et al, *Förderung von Kindern und Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund (Gutachten)*, European Medi@Culture-Online, 2003, <http://bit.ly/hcQEVI> (last accessed: April 15 2011).

²⁴⁵ Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research), *Apropos Sprachförderung*, Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, April 28, 2006, <http://bit.ly/fHjFB3> (last accessed: May 10, 2011).

²⁴⁶ Kyodo News: *Yearning for multiculturalism*.

²⁴⁷ Kyodo News: *Suicide prompts major bullying study*, The Japan Times Online, November 11, 2010, <http://bit.ly/mpp49m> (last accessed May 10, 2011).

multiethnic, multicultural Japan they will surely spend the majority of their lifetime in. Misconceptions and wrong images of immigrant minorities should be combated at an early point. Kim Bung Ang suggests: "Just like advocacy against smoking and the use of drugs, there should be more persistent campaigns against discrimination against foreigners".²⁴⁸

Concerned about the amount of Internet slander directed towards foreigners, along the lines of "Koreans go home", he argues one problem might be that the authors of these messages, like most Japanese, don't really know the reasons for why Koreans initially came to Japan. More generally, he argues, one should spread awareness of why these foreigners are living in Japan - citing reasons such as poverty and historical circumstances - to reduce the chance of Japanese making such statements.²⁴⁹ An illuminating compulsory school course on minorities and foreigners should definitely also cover the reasons for migration, and put an end to what Kim describes as a Japanese attitude of likening the situation of foreigners in Japan with their own situation when traveling abroad. What Kim touches upon here is the Japanese tendency of looking at anything foreign as temporary, and in a situation of being guest - surely bound to soon return "home". Indeed, this appears to be a widespread Japanese mentality: In the years I lived in Japan, just about every single time I, as a tangibly different foreigner, told a Japanese person that I was living in Japan, their follow-up question would be "*itsu karerundesu ka?*" ("when are you returning home").

3.6 Muslim concern: Unbalanced image and prejudice

Immigrant Muslims in Japan, being a marginalized group, do not have a strong or visible voice in society to negotiate their social image. Looking at other minority groups in Japan, the *burakumin* (Japan's former underclass caste) and *zainichi* for example are both well-represented by scholars as well as high-level politicians, but this is not the case for Muslims, which makes it hard for them to influence society's images of them. Many Muslims even hide from society because of their 'illegal' status.

One of the few arenas where they have a chance to convey an images of themselves to Japanese society is Japanese language Muslim websites. *Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji* (Homepage of Islamic Culture), the allegedly first Japanese website on Islam, features to an introduction to religion of Islam, under the title of *Isurāmu to wa* ("What Islam is").²⁵⁰ This introduction explains that the roots of the word Islam is the Arabian word for 'peace', but it can also have other meanings,

²⁴⁸ Kyodo News: *Yearning for multiculturalism*.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Online since 1998 according to the website, and still active today.

including obedience, meaning total obedience to Allah. The central teachings of Islam are described as being: to teach and preserve the teachings of Allah, Islam's only God, respecting and loving Him and receive protection in return, to rid believers of fear and sorrow, to acquire "true peace" in both flesh and spirit, and for every individual to reach their maximum potential, and "enjoy unlimited fortune".²⁵¹ They go on to list the six articles of belief, and the rituals of Islam.

The website hosts an article by the Islam scholar Shinya Makino, of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, who tries to answer question of "why is Islam hard to understand for Japanese?".²⁵² His answer is that 'Islam' cannot be confined to a mere question of religious belief, but also encompasses rules close to everyday life such as of what one can eat and drink - deeply related to people's lifestyles, and more broadly, their culture. How Islam is of such fundamental importance and influence to its believers lives is something that's unusual and hard to grasp for Japanese, he argues. On an updated front page statement, *Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji* argues that while Japan's relationship to Islamic countries has been deepening, and the public's awareness of Islam is raising thanks to good-written pieces of Islam in specialist magazines, as well as Islam being increasingly featured in mass media as well, understanding of Islam in Japan is still "unbalanced".²⁵³ Through the content on *Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji*, one can sense a concern about Japanese not understanding, or holding incorrect or imbalanced views and images of, and prejudices towards, Islam and its believers. What images do Japanese hold of Islam and muslims today? And are these images "unbalanced" - if so, why?

Pettigrew argues that research on prejudice and discrimination produces different results on the individual/intergroup level and the cultural/structural level. On the former, anti-immigrant prejudice and discrimination hardly differs from general outgroup prejudice and discrimination, and this pattern is similar "from Australia and South Africa to North America and Europe".²⁵⁴ On the latter, however, the prejudice and discrimination directed towards immigrants differs sharply compared to that directed towards other outgroups. He argues that not only laws, the employment situation, the speed of entry of the newcomers, the size of the immigrant group and prior history

²⁵¹ *Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji* (Homepage of Islamic Culture): *Ichī, Isuraamu no Oshie* (1, The teachings of Islam), http://www2.dokidoki.ne.jp/racket/sarato_02.html (last accessed April 15 2011).

²⁵² Shinya Makino, *Naze Isuraamu wa Nihonjin ni rikai shinikui ka, Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji* (Homepage of Islamic Culture), <http://www2.dokidoki.ne.jp/racket/rikai.html> (last accessed: April 15 2011).

²⁵³ *Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji* (Homepage of Islamic Culture), <http://www2.dokidoki.ne.jp/racket/> (last accessed April 15 2011).

²⁵⁴ Thomas F. Pettigrew, "Two-Level Approach to Anti-Immigration Prejudice", in Ramaswami Mahalingam (ed), *Cultural Psychology of Immigrants* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 96 - 97.

with immigration are contributing factors, but also prior relationship with the immigrant group in question.²⁵⁵

Looking at the situation of Muslim immigrants in contemporary Japan, then, we need not only need to understand Japan's short history of immigration, and immigration laws (see section 2.2), the size of its immigrant Muslim community (see section 3.1), and the problems such foreigners face in social arenas such as the labor market and more (see 3.3 through 3.6), but we also need to understand Japan's prior relationship to the Islamic World, and Muslims as a group, and its views on them throughout modern history. Therefore, before taking a look at contemporary Japanese images of Muslims, I will first take a look at the history of Japanese-Islamic relations.

4. History of Japanese images of Muslims

4.1 Prior to the 20th century

First contact with the Islamic world prior to the Tokugawa Period

The first European ships arrived in Japan in 1543²⁵⁶, and the early Portuguese and Spaniards frequenting the ports of Nagasaki brought with them influences Christianity and from *nanban*²⁵⁷ culture (culture of the people of the Iberian peninsula).²⁵⁸ Sugita argues that introducing Europe as a new intermediary was an important event in the history of relations between Japan and the Middle East because until then, the relations between the two had been entirely through China. Furthermore, he points to the significant presence of believers of Islam on the Iberian peninsula until 1492 (being controlled by the Muslim moor people), and that Arab Islamic culture flourished on the majority of the peninsula for a long period. The Western merchants also introduced Japan to new goods²⁵⁹ with names originally stemming from Arabic.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Hideaki Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995), 52.

²⁵⁷ The two-character word Nanban literally translates as “Southern barbarian”, and nanban culture was a word for the culture of the peoples of the Iberian peninsula, i.e. the Spaniards and Portuguese - both the culture in their home countries and in their South-East Asian colonies.

²⁵⁸ Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*, 52.

²⁵⁹ Such as *gibão* textiles and *aruheitou* candy.

²⁶⁰ Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*, 52.

Tokugawa Period's images of the Middle East

The Japanese of the Tokugawa Period (1603 - 1868) gained a new view on world geography through a mix of information from China and Europe, and gradually deepened their knowledge of the Middle Eastern countries. Eventually information from the latter gradually expelled and surpassed the former.²⁶¹ Newsletters of current world affairs presented to the Shogunate by Dutch merchants gave fairly detailed reports on current wars, civil wars and epidemics in Persia, the Ottoman Empire, the Arab peninsula and more.²⁶²

Hakuseki Arai and Joken Nishikawa's works on world geography (released in 1709 and 1713 respectively) were based on secondary sources,²⁶³ but nevertheless became milestones for Japan's knowledge of the outside world.²⁶⁴ Both made detailed descriptions of Persia, and Nishikawa describes the country as featuring monarchic rule, people who in their looks resemble Indians, tall golden towers and more. The latter are possibly a reference to the Minaret spires of mosques²⁶⁵. Both scholars listed what goods the country produces,²⁶⁶ and these listed exotic goods were all available for purchased in Nagasaki at the time.²⁶⁷ Widely known goods with names such as "Persia leather", "Persia horses" etc., spread awareness of the country to the greater public. Muslim moor merchants also frequented Nagasaki, doing business in Persian.²⁶⁸

Meiji accounts of the Islamic World

The Meiji Period's (1868 - 1912) early years were marked by a strong will to modernize and 'catch up' to Western civilization, regarded by the Japanese as the world's most advanced civilization. Infatuation with all things Western and focus on modernization caused down-prioritization of the Islamic World. In the 'Iwakura Mission' of 1871 to 1873, Meiji oligarchs undertook a journey to various countries in the world.²⁶⁹ Besides diplomatic goals, the purpose of the journey was to gather

²⁶¹ Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*, 52.

²⁶² The Tokugawa shogunate was the feudal regime in Japan at the time.

²⁶³ Including Chinese-language works by Italian missionaries.

²⁶⁴ Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*, 53-54.

²⁶⁵ Or a more specific reference to the magnificent Timur empire architecture, like the big mosques or the Gur-e Amir mausoleum, in Samarkand (Uzbekistan).

²⁶⁶ Goods listed include frankincense, licorice, raisins and almond, leather and thread, rose petal perfume, and "the world's best horses".

²⁶⁷ Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*, 55.

²⁶⁸ Sugita, *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*, 64.

²⁶⁹ But focusing on America and Europe. In the course of the two-year mission, destinations like San Francisco, Washington DC, Britain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Russia, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Bavaria, Austria, Italy and Switzerland were all explored thoroughly, but additional brief stops were made during the return voyage, including such places as Egypt, Aden, Ceylon, Singapore, Saigon, Hong Kong and Shanghai.

information that could be useful in Japan's modernization. The Embassy's crew initially counted 46 people, but the number kept changing throughout the journey.²⁷⁰ One crew member, historian Kume Kunitake, kept a detailed travel log and eventually compiled a five-volume account of the journey,²⁷¹ which provides an interesting insight to the Embassy's impressions of, and attitudes towards, a number of Islamic countries and their people.

The Meiji oligarchs in the travel accounts express admiration for Egypt, but predominantly for aspects that Europe is responsible for. While deeply fascinated with the "immerse undertaking" of constructing the Suez canal, they emphasize this achievement being thanks to the French engineer de Lesseps, and describe the Egyptian laborers doing the digging as "backward", "ignorant" and "unaccustomed to engineering work", also stressing the fact that Egypt didn't have enough machinery at the time.²⁷² An admiration of Western civilization's achievements, as well as Eurocentrism-influenced views of the Islamic civilization lagging behind in time, can be detected in these accounts. Port Said's natives are described as "copper-colored", the men with "long and curly" beards and the women covering themselves "so only their eyes are visible", and the Japanese claim that because it is so hot and dry, the common people normally sleep on the ground.²⁷³

When visiting Yemen, they present a theory of why the people of "tropical regions" are not performing great achievements the way Europeans are. The Japanese claim that they in the parts of Europe with the harshest climate and the least fertile ground observed that the local people seemed to always be working all-day until exhausted, "throughout the year",²⁷⁴ and then contrast this to fertile "tropical regions", where people "don't need to" develop solutions such as clothes for cold weather, protection of their homes against wind and rain. They don't even need to concern themselves with storing food for the future, it was claimed - because everything they eat "grows easily". After eating, "they lie down", and "pass their days almost like beggars", content just by continuing to live, "and so in thousands of years they have not advanced one step in civilization",²⁷⁵ the Japanese harshly claim. In countries like Britain and France, people are forced to work hard for anything, and thanks to this create great civilizations, was the embassy's conclusion.

The theory can be seen as influenced by environmental determinism, which was introduced to Japan by Thomas Buckle, whose *History of Civilisation in England* was widely read in the Meiji

²⁷⁰ Kume Kunitake: The Iwakura Embassy, Volume 5: *Continental Europe, 3; and the Voyage Home*, p. 359 - 362.

²⁷¹ Kume Kunitake: The Iwakura Embassy, Volume 5: *Continental Europe, 3; and the Voyage Home*, Page 266.

²⁷² Kume Kunitake: The Iwakura Embassy, Volume 5: *Continental Europe, 3; and the Voyage Home*, page 272.

²⁷³ Kume Kunitake: The Iwakura Embassy, Volume 5: *Continental Europe, 3; and the Voyage Home*, Page 269.

²⁷⁴ Kume Kunitake: The Iwakura Embassy, Volume 5: *Continental Europe, 3; and the Voyage Home*, page 289.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

period. Also, Friedrich Ratzel, inventor of the term “Lebensraum” was influential in Europe at the time of the embassy’s visit. The period when Europe was at the height of infatuation with Darwinian ideas coincided with Japan’s modernization, when it studied the West more eagerly than ever before.²⁷⁶ From the 1890s, environmental determinism was even taught in school.²⁷⁷

Conclusively, one can see that 1870s Japan, with new ideas and uncritical admiration for Europe, took a Eurocentric and arguably rather ignorant view on Islamic countries and their people. One can detect a belief in Western society being the world’s most ‘modern’ and ‘civilized’, and a self-image of Japan being ranked second. Non-Western, non-Japanese cultures were thus in this period’s modernity discourse looked down upon: They were regarded hierarchically below, and the Japanese seemed eager to differentiate themselves from other non-Western societies, and legitimize their rank as second. Contemporary phenomena such as assimilation pressure towards Muslims (see section 3.4) and the view of their culture as ‘backwards’ or ‘uncivilized’ (see section 5.4) can be interpreted as the legacy of this Meiji era strain of thought.

Furthermore, some may argue that today’s Japanese hold similarly ignorant views on, and images of, Islamic countries, though their views and images this time correspond with the US’s rather than Europe’s, as many Japanese may see the Islamic world through an ‘American lens’. Either way, between the ignorance of the early Meiji era and that of the post-Cold War, post-September-11 era, there was a considerable period of time when Japan’s view on the Islamic world took completely different turns. In the first half of the 20th century, philosophical and political ties to the Islamic world, and awareness of Muslims in public discourse as well as in high-level politics, arguably was at a historic all-time high.

4.2 Early 20th century

Mutual interest between the Islamic world and Japan: Pan-Islamism and Pan-Asianism

Intellectuals all across Asia admired Japan for using Western civilization against Western imperialism and for becoming Asia’s first constitutional monarchy. The Meiji Restoration was perceived as a model for how to modernize without becoming too Westernized or turning to Christianity. At the turn of the century, Japan-Islamic relations comprised of transnational

²⁷⁶ Richard Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), 3.

²⁷⁷ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 11-12.

affiliations linking Japanese Pan-Asianist intellectuals, military officials and diplomats with their Pan-Islamic counterparts.²⁷⁸

Japan's Pan-Asianism is today often closely associated with expansionism - in contemporary Japanese dictionaries the term is often defined as the Asian nations united "under Japanese leadership" to resist Western invasion.²⁷⁹ Yet, Pan-Asianism researcher Eri Hotta divides Pan-Asianism into three stages,²⁸⁰ where only the final stage matches this image. While the first stage emphasized the spiritual and philosophical dimensions of Asia,²⁸¹ the second sought an alliance between the nations of Asia. As an example of the second, she cites the government-sponsored *Tōa Dōbunkai* ("East Asian Same Letters Society"), founded in 1898,²⁸² who called for a Sino-Japanese alliance of equals, arguing they, being of the same race, should stand together against the white race.²⁸³ The third form is associated with Japan's expansionist ideology of leadership in Asia.²⁸⁴ As an example, she cites the ultranationalist and violent *Kokuryūkai* ("Amur River Society"), founded in 1901, who argued that the Japanese Empire should transform their weak Asian neighbor countries in the image of Japan.²⁸⁵

Islamic World's admiration for, and presence in, Japan

When Japan defeated Russia in the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, the news "electrified" the nationalist movement in India, to whom "Japan's victory shattered the illusion of European invincibility".²⁸⁶ Likewise, Islamic newspapers celebrated the news as a victory for the Eastern people over the West, as well as for constitutionalism over despotism.²⁸⁷ Egyptian, Turkish and Persian poets wrote odes to the Japanese nation and emperor, and many Muslims sought cooperation with Japan, which was increasingly being regarded a promising challenger to Western hegemony.²⁸⁸

²⁷⁸ Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam".

²⁷⁹ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931 - 1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 2.

²⁸⁰ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*.

²⁸¹ Thoughts summed up in his work *The Ideals of the East* in 1903.

²⁸² Takuo Ishida, *Tō-a Dōbun Shoin: Tō-a Dōbunkai Kankō Zasshi Kiji Dēta Bēsu*, Aichi University, Published March 2008 and revised October 2008, http://toadb.aichi-u.ac.jp/DB_Kaidai.pdf (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

²⁸³ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*, 39.

²⁸⁴ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*, 30.

²⁸⁵ Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War*, 45.

²⁸⁶ R. P. Dua, *The impact of the Russo-Japanese (1905) war on Indian politics* (Dehli: S. Chand & Co., 1966), vii.

²⁸⁷ Esenbel, Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1146.

²⁸⁸ Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1140-1141.

Anti-colonial activists from various countries gathered in Japan, which became a center of activity for all Asians who had a white enemy to defeat and wished to study modernization without westernization. They included the likes of Vietnamese nationalism pioneer Phan Boi Chau²⁸⁹, who observed Japan to learn how to defeat the French, and Indian nationalist activist Rash Behari Bose, who fled from the British, went into exile in Japan, and eventually joined the *Kokuryūkai*.²⁹⁰ The Ottoman Pan-Islamist intellectual Abdürresid Ibrahim described the Tokyo of 1908 as “a haven for Muslim activists seeking collaboration with Japan against Western powers”.²⁹¹ Ibrahim made a translation for the Islamic World of the pamphlet “Asia in Danger” by Hasan Hatano Uho, a Japanese Pan-Asianist who had adopted a Muslim name, and advocated an alliance of the Japanese and Ottomans to prevent European imperialism in Asia. The pamphlet had photos of beheadings, tortures, and massacres conducted in Asia by Western imperialists.²⁹² To the various nationalists movements that saw their members being taken under Japanese protection, the support meant a lot: To Indian nationalists for example, although Japan gave no “material” support to the Indian cause, the fact that revolutionaries found refuge in Japan was a source of encouragement.²⁹³

Expansionism and Taishō Period

Japan gradually grew more expansionist and imperialistic, while continuing their fascination with ideas such as social darwinism and environmental determinism. Having found inspiration in Europe’s discourse of ‘civilization’, and the “white man’s burden” of occupying and ruling territories in Asia and Africa, Japan as a ‘civilized country’ saw themselves contributing to the progress of world civilization by bearing their part of the burden, and set out to attain a number of colonies, starting with Taiwan in 1895 and Korea in 1910.²⁹⁴ The following Taishō (1912 - 1926) period was marked by even greater expansionism and outward-looking perspective, and eventually, Japanese authorities made use of contacts between Japanese Pan-Asianists and Muslims to systematically practice an Islam policy.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁹ Guy Faure and Laurent Schwab, *Japan-Vietnam: a relation under influences* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 12.

²⁹⁰ Mihir Bose, *Raj, secrets, revolution: a life of Subhas Chandra Bose* (Grice Chapman Publishing, 2004), 220.

²⁹¹ Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1148.

²⁹² Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1149.

²⁹³ Dua, *The impact of the Russo-Japanese (1905) war on Indian politics*, 48.

²⁹⁴ Dick Stegewerns, “The Japanese ‘Civilization Critics’ and the National Identity of Their Asian Neighbours, 1918-1932: The Case of Yoshino Sakuzō, in *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945*, edited by Robert Cribb and Narangoa Li, 107-128 (London & New York: Routledge, 2003), 108; Dick Stegewerns, *Adjusting to the New World: Japanese Opinion Leaders of the Taishō Generation and the Outside World, 1918-1932* (Doctoral thesis: Faculty of Arts, Leiden University, 2007), <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/1887/12151/1/Thesis.pdf> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

²⁹⁵ Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1154.

In the years following the 1917 Russian Revolution, a few hundred Turkism Muslims emigrated from Russia to Japan.²⁹⁶ The Pan-Asianist and Pan-Islamic movements both became increasingly military-oriented and anticommunist right-wing in character following the revolution, and the Japanese government started actively using Islam against communism.²⁹⁷ The Japanese argued the Soviet Union would eventually face a “nationality problem” with their Altaic Muslims,²⁹⁸ and arguments of a special link between the Japanese and North Asian peoples speaking Altaic languages was increasingly heard in public discourse. The strong pro-Islam currents in the government were due to belief that Islam could contain communism, and the hope that the world’s 300 million Muslims could be potential allies.²⁹⁹

4.3 1930s

The Japanese puppet state of *Manshū-koku*, which existed in Manchuria from 1932 to 1945 and was actively promoted as multi-ethnic,³⁰⁰ became a haven for many Pan-Islamist exiles. Escaping Leninist and Stalinist oppression, they settled down in the puppet state under protection of the Japanese military, which saw this large community of Muslim immigrants as a force that could be used for anti-Russian intelligence.³⁰¹ One prominent figure among these Muslim exiles was Kurban Ali, who pioneered the Tokyo Mosque project,³⁰² which was completed in 1938 and whose official support from the Japanese government can be interpreted as a confirmation on their behalf on the adoption of an Islam policy as part of their Asianist foreign policy.³⁰³ The opening ceremony of the mosque was attended by the Japanese government and elite as well as international guests from various Islamic countries whose trip had been covered by Japan.³⁰⁴

By the end of the 1930s, there were roughly 1000 Muslims in Japan.³⁰⁵ In 1939, the Japanese government discussed adding Islam to the official list of religions in Japan’s new Religion Law, along with Buddhism, Shinto and Christianity, but eventually did not mention it directly in the law,

²⁹⁶ Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

²⁹⁷ Crowley, as referenced in Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1155.

²⁹⁸ Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1155.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Robert Cribb and Narangoa Li (ed), *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945* (London & New York: Routledge, 2003), 14.

³⁰¹ Bennigsen and Wimbush, as quoted in Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1156-1157.

³⁰² Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1159.

³⁰³ Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1164.

³⁰⁴ Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam”, 1165.

³⁰⁵ Tanada, as quoted in Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

fearing it would generate Soviet suspicion of Japan's outreach among Central Asian Muslims. In the early 1940s, the number of books and journals on Islam published, and the the purchase of library collections of European-language books on Islam all increased drastically, mostly thanks to state funding - by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the military and Manchuria-related establishments, who argued that a better understanding of the Muslim colonial subjects was needed.

4.4 1940s

Respected scholar Shumei Okawa, philosophy graduate of Tokyo Imperial University, focused entirely on Islamic studies in his later years. To Okawa, the Pan-Islamism's challenge to the West's domination was a historical turning point.³⁰⁶ He emphasized that Japanese anti-Islamic sentiments were due to the fact that Japan's major source of information on Islam, Christian Europeans, had been in conflicts with Islamic powers since the Middle Ages, and argued that anti-Muslim views had spread to all Westernized parts of Asia. He also challenged the view of Islam's spread being due to Muslim militaristic expansion, emphasizing that Islam is a peaceful religion usually spread through missionary work.³⁰⁷ In 1942, Okawa released a lecture collection called "Introduction to Islam" to help the war effort.³⁰⁸ During the war trials in Tokyo, Okawa justified Japan's mission to liberate Asia from Western colonialism by war if necessary,³⁰⁹ but his behavior during the trials led to him being sent to a mental ward following imprisonment. In prison and the mental ward, he translated the Koran to Japanese.³¹⁰

Until the end of the war, the Japanese Empire had a vast number of Muslim subjects throughout Asia.³¹¹ One example of the actual gains of Japan's Islam policy is the 1942 invasion of the Dutch Indies, when the military's entrance was assisted by Japanese Muslims who mobilized Indonesian Muslim leaders and communities to aid the invasion.³¹² Indonesia, today home to the world's largest Muslim population, was occupied by Japan until the war defeat in 1945. Nevertheless, besides the case of Indonesia, Japan does not have an imperialist past in the Islamic World, and was rather to some degree imagined as fighting on the same side in the 'battle' of

³⁰⁶ Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1162.

³⁰⁷ Cemin Aydin, "Overcoming Eurocentrism? Japan's Islamic Studies during the Era of the Greater East Asia War (1937 - 45)" in *The Islamic Middle East and Japan*, edited by Renée Worringer (New Jersey: Markus Wiener Publishers), 144.

³⁰⁸ Aydin, "Overcoming Eurocentrism?", 137; Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1163.

³⁰⁹ Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1141

³¹⁰ Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1162.

³¹¹ Aydin, "Overcoming Eurocentrism?", 138.

³¹² Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam", 1167.

‘civilisations’. And although, as discussed in Chapter 2, the new ‘homogeneous’, ‘single-race’ Japan developed afterwards largely forgot its ties to the Islamic World, in some cases this past is still traceable to a certain degree: Taro Aso, in his time as foreign minister, made controversial remarks about how the physical characteristics of “blue eyes and blond hair” makes it hard to gain trust in the Middle East, due to a history of Western exploitation in the region, but that the Japanese with their “yellow faces” and no history of exploiting the region or are now “doing what Americans can't do”.³¹³

5. Contemporary Japanese Images of Muslims

Does the contemporary Japanese public have defined personal impressions of Muslim immigrants? Citizens of the Kantō region are likely to have enough contact to form such impressions, with the heavy concentration of Muslims in the region, although there are unfortunately few surveys examining such views. The lack of research examining views on Muslims held Kantō’s population, or Japan’s national population, is an unfilled gap that would be interesting to explore in future research. Although by no means a representative selection, Sakurai conducted a survey on students of her (women’s) university in Tokyo. No less than 27 % of respondents, who were general students (not students taking courses on related subjects), stated they sometimes see Muslim foreigners in their local area. About half of these respondents had also had conversations with these residents.³¹⁴ In general, however, Japanese have very limited direct experience with Muslims, and their views on them are therefore largely shaped by representations of them by the media³¹⁵ and authorities.

³¹³ Justin McCurry, *Blue eyes, blond hair: that's US problem, says Japanese minister*, The Guardian Online, March 23, 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/mar/23/japan.usa> (last accessed April 27, 2011).

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

5.1 Image of Muslims I - ‘Outsiders’ in the ‘homogeneous’ nation of Japan

Muslim immigrants in Japan may feel that they, despite their hard work and contributions to society, are not wanted due to simply not ‘belonging’. According to Sakurai,³¹⁶ many Muslim immigrants currently feel isolated and not like true members of Japanese society, and Onishi argues Muslim immigrants are met with a Japanese meta-narrative of homogeneity, which labels them as outsiders.³¹⁷ Foreigners in Japan are frequently labeled this way: *gaikokujin*, the Japanese word for foreign person, is often shortened to just *gaijin*, which literally means “outside person”. The fact that Japanese often regard new and different citizens as mere ‘outsiders’, a word bearing negative connotations, makes it difficult to convince them of the positive aspects of diversity in society. Siddle argues that any celebration of ethnic diversity in Japan is always met by “the master narrative of seamless national homogeneity that dominates Japan’s discursive space”.³¹⁸ What is this master narrative of homogeneity?

As discussed earlier, the aggressive expansionist Japanese Empire of the former half of the 20th century was completely overhauled following the crushing defeat in World War Two. The re-invented and re-branded Japan granted all colonies independence,³¹⁹ and emphasised its cultural and racial homogeneity. Some may argue that the hegemonic narratives of Japan as a homogeneous nation after 1945 were actually just a slightly altered continuation of the wartime dominant official ideology of the family-state.³²⁰ Either way, Japan was to be presented as homogeneous nation with only ‘ethnic Japanese’. What exactly a ‘Japanese’ is, however, has shifted various times through history. While an ethnic Japanese by some definitions is supposed to be a native of the Japanese islands, there are several minority groups that are native to the relatively arbitrary collection of islands that today are defined as the political entity ‘Japan’. The *ryukyu* and the *ainu*, perceived as foreign before they were re-branded as ‘Japanese’, are both distinct ethnic groups with their own culture, history and language.

Still, the demography discourse of the politicians of post-war Japan has underplayed the significance of these ethnic minorities, considering all Japanese to be of one ‘race’, and the imagined merits of Japan’s homogeneity have been stressed over and over again by prolific ruling

³¹⁶ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

³¹⁷ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 223.

³¹⁸ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 1.

³¹⁹ Or they were handed back to their former rulers, as in cases such as Taiwan’s and Manchuria’s.

³²⁰ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 18.

politicians in post-war Japan. The ruling party in this context is the LDP, who ruled Japan almost continuously from the end of World War Two until 2009. The LDP can also to some degree be seen as a continuation of the ruling power in wartime Japan: After the war, and the dissolution of the nationalistic and militaristic government, the same conservative elite was quite quickly once more assigned to rule Japan, the only exception being the military elite.³²¹ Conservative politicians put in prison at the end of the war were soon released in the interest of the US, whose strategic plan for Japan in the Cold War era prioritized the effective development of a high growth, successfully capitalist, anti-communist state separated from rest of the region.

The LDP of today is a big coalition of many fractions, and these fractions have quite different positions on the political spectrum. However, a number of highly prominent LDP politicians - including Prime Ministers - up until today have had political profiles which can be described as a right-of-center populist with clear nationalist tendencies (or been outright proclaiming themselves as 'nationalist'). These outspoken LDP politicians have shown no hesitance in time and again making a point of Japan's supposed homogeneity. LDP prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone in 1986 went as far as stating that "Japan has no 'racial minorities'"³²² (ignoring not only different ethnic groups such as *ainu* and *ryukyu*, but also the large presence of Koreans, who are also usually described as a different 'race') and that Japan's economy was superior to the US's because the former has a homogeneous population of only Japanese, while the population of the US includes groups such as blacks, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans.³²³

The homogeneity discourse emphasised by politicians like Nakasone can be seen as not only nationalist, but also racist. Balibar,³²⁴ exploring the relationship between nationalism and racism, argues that nationalism "nurtures the fetishes of a national identity" which has derived from the nation's origins and needs to be preserved,³²⁵ and also that racism constantly induces racial and cultural pureness for the nation in order for the nation to be itself.³²⁶ The nation thus has to isolate, before eliminating or expelling, 'false' or 'exogenous' elements, he argues.³²⁷ A moderate version of this strain of thoughts can appear to be wide-spread in Japan as well. The idea of Japan being at risk

³²¹ Gavan McCormack et al, *Multicultural Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 273.

³²² Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 2.

³²³ Marit Bruaset, "Nasjonalisme i etterkrigstidens Japan", In *Vinduer mot Japan*, edited by Terje Grønning (Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, 2005), 223.

³²⁴ Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. (London/New York: Verso, 1991), p. 54.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, p. 59.

³²⁷ Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, p. 60.

for losing its uniqueness and ‘Japaneseness’ due to the contemporary increase of foreigners and ‘international’ elements in society, is a popular and wide-spread thought that can be easily exploited by populist politicians.

Cultural nationalism in Japan

The imagining of homogeneity is a discourse that is part of a larger body of thought: cultural nationalism. Central to cultural nationalism is the construction of a national *us* through emphasising one’s own country’s unique culture, as opposed to foreign cultures, exaggerating or even inventing differences between *us* and the *others*. Cultural nationalism, Inoguchi argues, arises when national unity and boundaries are “confronted by globalisation’s penetration and/or subversion” and “involves the yearning for an imagined community”.³²⁸ It responds by making use of national memory and identity and is defensive in aim but aggressive in manifestation - functioning as a “last bastion of anti-globalisation protest”.³²⁹

In the 1980s the Japanese education system was altered and nationalism saw an upswing, after a period of right-wing politicians, led by Nakasone, urged a renewal of Japanese national pride and patriotism.³³⁰ Nakasone advocated an internationalization of society, but argued this could not be done without strengthening national identity. Nakasone’s campaign, as well as the changes to the educational system, which included the introduction of controversial history textbooks and of mandatory use of nationalist symbols *Hinomaru* (the national flag) and *Kimigayo* (the national anthem) at schools, have been criticized for only showcasing desire to strengthen Japan’s position in the world and the Japanese’s patriotic sentiments, not desire to foster international understanding.

Japan’s recession since 1991 has coincided with China’s economic rise, and the Japanese public has seen large-scale restructuring and redundancies as companies move production to China³³¹. Additionally, many Japanese citizens grew critical of the political relationship of the US and Japan in the years following September 11th 2001, as their government’s support for the US’s ‘War on Terror’ included dispatching Japan’s Self Defence Forces to the Indian Ocean and Kuwait to assist US troops.³³² To many citizens, this was a violation of the constitution, which proclaims Japan as a pacifist nation never to be engaged in war.

³²⁸ Takashi Inoguchi, “Globalisation and cultural nationalism”. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture*, edited by Yoshio Sugimoto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 337-339.

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Bruaset, “Nasjonalisme i etterkrigstidens Japan”, 222-224.

³³¹ Inoguchi, “Globalisation and cultural nationalism”, 346.

³³² With refueling aircrafts while in the Indian Ocean, and with shipping materials, vehicles, food and medicine while in Kuwait. See Inoguchi, “Globalisation and cultural nationalism”, 347.

The negative sentiments towards specific countries such as China and the US, combined with a yearning for a truly Japanese identity in the face of globalisation's weakening of the national unity, can both be seen as causes for cultural nationalism in Japan. McCormack argues that Japan's great post-war economic success caused a *kokusaika* or "internationalization" of Japan, but that this *kokusaika* in effect only signified Japan's "increased weight" in the tripolar world economy centred on Japan, North America and the EU - not an internationalization of domestic Japanese society. The same success that creates this *kokusaika*, he argues, continues to stimulate a desire to assert Japan's identity more forcefully, which sharpens international and domestic tensions.³³³

Morris-Suzuki makes similar arguments to McCormack about the causal relationship of *kokusaika* and ideological currents such as 'homogeneity' discourse and cultural nationalism, arguing that developments in transport and communications as well as the rapid flow of capital and people in the world today are threatening to undermine conventional images of 'national culture', and that the uncertainty caused by this generates desire to define cultural tradition.³³⁴ The question of culture became especially noticeable in Japan because its 'internationalization' coincided with a dramatical growth of its power in the world, she argues.³³⁵ Murphy-Shigematsu, on the other hand, views the emphasis on homogeneity as less new, with different historical reasons. What he calls an "obsession with maintaining an illusion of oneness", and of being a "homogenous nation that has evolved naturally since ancient times" might be connected to attempts of negating the failure of Japanizing colonial subjects like the Koreans during the colonial period, he argues.³³⁶

One concrete way the strong desire to assert Japanese identity has manifested itself, has been the post-war phenomenon of *nihonjin-ron* - a popular literary genre whose name can be translated into "theory or discourse on what it means to be Japanese", and which focuses on issues of national and cultural identity. *Nihonjin-ron* literature can be found incorporating any number of fields such as psychology, history, sociology and philosophy. A key feature of *nihonjin-ron* is its emphasis on Japanese culture as the key to the country's economic success, as well as the uniqueness of Japan.³³⁷ *Nihonjin-ron* literature on the Japanese language has suggested it is so unique, only the Japanese are able to ever fully learn it. During the bubble economy, when the popularity of *nihonjin-ron* literature was at its peak, its focus on the uniqueness of Japan was matched by extraordinary

³³³ Gavan McCormack et al, *Multicultural Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 275.

³³⁴ Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan* (London & New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 61.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Murphy-Shigematsu, "The invisible man".

³³⁷ Bruaset, "Nasjonalisme i etterkrigstidens Japan", 223.

Japanese economic success. As foreigners attempted to find explanations to Japan's success, many turned to the same narrative of uniqueness: Ezra Vogel's *Japan As Number One* (1979) is an example of one such work, over-emphasizing Japan's uniqueness. The book eventually sold better in Japan than in any other country.³³⁸

Ryang argues that for many decades after the war, ethnographic studies of Japan focused on "strange, unfamiliar aspects of Japanese society, fundamentally different from those of the west", matched by "Japan's self-promotion as culturally unique, with its post-war prosperity being attributed to its racial homogeneity".³³⁹ When it comes to popular representations of Japan, this is arguably still the case: During media coverage of the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami disaster and its aftermath, one could see a resurgence of foreign commentators describing Japanese society with a narrative of uniqueness.

German weekly magazine *Stern*, the second biggest German-language news magazine of its kind,³⁴⁰ on their cover page proclaimed the Japanese as *Das unglaubliche Volk* ("the incredible people"), openly suggesting their culture and experiences with catastrophes shape their mentality into one marked by proudness, discipline, unselfishness and the ability to cope well with suffering.³⁴¹ Arguably, *nihonjin-ron* is not merely a manifestation of Japanese self-celebration, but a body of thought fueled by foreign discourse as well.



The notion of 'race' and the Japanese concept of blood line

A potential reason for why foreigners like Muslim immigrants are perceived as 'outsiders' in Japan is the fact that they're imagined to be of a different 'race', and the Japanese national identity has been emphasised as 'single-race'. The classification of *homo sapiens* into different subspecies, or 'races', based on their physical appearance has been outdated as a biological concept due to developments in genetics³⁴². The concept is however still relevant as a social concept - regardless of their imagined nature, 'races' still undeniably have real and significant influence on human

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Sonya Ryang, *Japan and National Anthropology: A critique* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 8.

³⁴⁰ Meedia: *TOP 100 Zeitschriften*, Meedia, <http://meedia.de/print/top-100-zeitschriften.html> (last accessed: April 9, 2011).

³⁴¹ *Stern*, Volume 13, 2011, cover page. The cover page of this volume can also be viewed at the following address: <http://www.stern.de/magazin/heft/stern-nr-13-24032011-das-unglaubliche-volk-1666460.html> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).

³⁴² Banton, as referenced in Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 7.

relations. The social construction of 'race' can be viewed in light of power relations, originating in certain historical contexts, where one group aims to differentiate, exclude and dominate another.³⁴³

Concepts such as the family-state, and the close association of 'race' and 'nationality', in East Asian countries like Japan (Korea being a similar case) can be seen as obstacles to the inclusion of foreigners into society. The Japanese people can in the Japanese language be described as being a *minzoku* - a word that can be translated as "people", "race", "ethnic group" or "nation", illustrating a history of interchangeability of 'race' and nationality. When the Meiji elite of the late 1880s was concerned about the population's lacking sense of national unity, they applied the concepts of *minzoku* and common ancestry in order to build the 'imagined community' of the nation³⁴⁴. They emphasized Japan's unbroken imperial line, and advocated that the basis of the state's foundation was that the state "is a great family" and the family "a small state".³⁴⁵ Stressing 'race', and abusing deep-rooted concepts of ancestry ideology, the Meiji elite managed to build a Japanese nation state on the premise of it being a single-race natural entity of one big family. In the 1930s, this concept was taken even further, and the overlap between 'race' and nation became even stronger³⁴⁶ in the official promotion of the view that every Japanese shared common ancestry in Amaterasu Omikami, the Sun Goddess.

The concepts of 'ethnicity' and 'nationality' are closely linked in Japan, and will continue to be a difficult paradigm to challenge. A division of the two concepts is a quite new idea in Europe as well: Western Europe already had substantial levels of immigration of workers in the 1950s and 60s, but the gradual change into multicultural societies and the eventual development of a perception of nationality and ethnicity as separate has been a slow process. In fact, the concept is still controversial, and far from commonly accepted. In Japan, which had virtually no official immigration until the 1980s³⁴⁷, and is still accepting few immigrants yearly, the concept of ethnicity and nationality as separate entities still has weak foothold, and these new concepts of identity have to challenge traditional concepts such as the Japanese "blood line".

Dikötter cites a survey that explored Japanese's feelings towards less "obvious" foreign immigrants - namely, Japanese-Americans and Koreans".³⁴⁸ The survey found that most

³⁴³ See Miles, as referenced in Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 8.

³⁴⁴ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 12-13.

³⁴⁵ Hozumi, as quoted in Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 14.

³⁴⁶ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 18.

³⁴⁷ Roger Goodman, "Afterword: Marginals, minorities, majorities and migrants - studying the Japanese borderlands in contemporary Japan", in *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 325-333 (London & New York: Routledge 2008).

³⁴⁸ Frank Dikötter (ed), *The construction of racial identities in China and Japan: historical and contemporary perspectives* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 203.

respondents “did not foresee any serious obstacles” for Japanese-Americans in adjusting to Japan and integrating culturally, despite being born and socialized in the US, citing reasons such as them having ‘Japanese blood’, and thus being able to “eventually learn to behave and think like ‘us’” after a period of adjustment - something they had less confidence in the Koreans succeeding in because “it was claimed they do not have ‘Japanese blood’”. Dikötter argues that this comparison reveals the racialised nature of Japanese cultural identity.³⁴⁹ Next, he cites another survey, which he conducted himself on “fairly well-educated” sections of the population.³⁵⁰ He found that the majority of respondents to his survey believed that foreigners, even those born in Japan, could not fully become part of social life in Japan, being unable to understand, and adjust to, the distinctive Japanese patterns of behavior and thought.

A typical narrative of uniqueness, the imagined similarities between all members of the ‘Japanese race’ suggested here also indicates a belief in that the Japanese ‘imagined community’ goes along race and blood lines. Weiner suggests that race in Japan is imagined in the sense that it has no real biological foundation and that the members of the “race” don’t know most of their fellow members, yet feel a sense of communion.³⁵¹ Operating with a ‘blood line’ concept for defining belongingness is however hardly unique to Japan. As discussed in section 2.2, Japan is similar to not only South Korea, but also Israel and Germany in this regard.

In conclusion, one can interpret the Japanese perception of Muslim foreigners being ‘outsiders’ even after settling down in Japan as a consequence of a combination of post-war ‘homogeneity’ discourse, cultural nationalism, *nihonjin-ron* discourse, and the close and racialised link between ‘ethnicity’ and ‘nation’, as well as the idea of the state as a family, in modern Japan. Politicians and media frequently reinforce these discourses and ideologies.

³⁴⁹ Dikötter, *The construction of racial identities in China and Japan*, 204.

³⁵⁰ Dikötter, *The construction of racial identities in China and Japan*, 203.

³⁵¹ Weiner (ed): *Japan's minorities: the illusion of homogeneity*.

5.2 Image of Muslims II - ‘Illegals’

Japanese government and police, pursuing strict anti-overstayer policies, at times employ speculative methods to track down these ‘illegals’. In urban areas in major cities, leaflets or posters spreading propaganda-like messages about the dangers of foreigners have not only stressed them as ‘illegals’ in the sense of overstaying their visas, but singled them out as criminals in a broader sense. A poster distributed by the police in Ikunoku, Osaka in 2007 (see illustration to the right), read: “Help us stop illegal overstaying and illegal labor - in these days of foreign crime rapidly increasing”³⁵² - despite recent national news of crimes committed by foreigners declining.³⁵³ Suggestions of everyone

“cooperating” to track down the criminals, combined with illustrations of white- and brown-skinned foreigners, encouraged unhealthy and racist patterns of thought to the mainstream society, of being watchful of all tangibly different minorities and assume them to be criminals.

Also in popular culture, Muslim immigrants may be portrayed as ‘illegal’ marginalized members of society. The popular television drama series *Ikebukuro West Gate Park* (2000) featured a character named Ali, an illegal immigrant. In episode four of the series, the protagonist Makoto pays a visit to Ali’s home, and it appears he is living tightly jammed together with four other similar-looking immigrants in a tiny apartment in secrecy (see illustration to the left, or the video clip [<http://bit.ly/h2XQw5>]). Ali is in the episode portrayed as kind but troubled, and ends up being deported.³⁵⁴ While the character is represented in a relatively flattering fashion, it still contributes to an image of people of middle eastern appearances being ‘illegals’. Komai suggests avoiding the



³⁵² Debito Arudou, *Beware of foreigners' leaflets in Ikuno-ku, Osaka*, Debito.org, July 1, 2007, <http://bit.ly/lyLsXT> (last accessed: May 10, 2011)

³⁵³ Kyodo News, *Number of crime cases involving foreign suspects down in '06: NPA*, The Japan Times Online, February 9, 2007, <http://bit.ly/hTNSPv> (last accessed May 10, 2011).

³⁵⁴ Tokyo Broadcasting System, *Ikebukuro West Gate Park*, episode 4, 2000.

term ‘illegal workers’, as it bears connotations of crime, and encourages using the term ‘undocumented workers’ instead. He argues that the activity of these workers differs from what we usually think of as crime, considering they do not injure other people or steal property, but instead diligently perform work that Japanese people do not wish to do.³⁵⁵ Campaigns such as the Ikunoku police’s posters spreads fear and mistrust based on physical looks, singling out human beings who in reality do not constitute any danger to the public, and whose only ‘crime’ constitutes of filling work positions the Japanese economy would be struggling to fill without them.

5.3 Image of Muslims III - ‘Terrorist’ image?

The terrorist attacks in New York City on September 11 2001 killed 24 Japanese citizens, and generated associations of Islam with terrorism. Suspicions of al Qaeda and other radical groups establishing in Japan, and Osama Bin Laden’s verbal threats against Japan in his 2003 message on *al Jazeera*³⁵⁶ didn’t improve the situation either. At the same time as Muslim immigrants are getting increasingly settled down in Japan, skepticism toward Islam persists due to misconceptions of Islam being a ‘terrorist’ religion,³⁵⁷ and Muslims in Japan feel vulnerable due to being viewed with suspicion after September 11.³⁵⁸ A 2006 survey of high school students in Japan revealed that 75 % of the students believed Islam was aggressive - 92 % of the same students cited television as their main source of information about Islam.³⁵⁹ The current DPJ-led government in December 2010 launched a new defense policy for 2011 to 2015 emphasizing terrorism and guerilla attacks specifically, describing them as “new threats”.³⁶⁰

The fear of domestic Muslim ‘terrorists’ made major headlines in 2004, when the small community of Nishi-Kawaguchi outside Tokyo was subject to a police raid where at least eight foreigners, who were suspected Al-Qaeda members, were arrested.³⁶¹ Japan’s National Police Agency in 2005 spread further fear through a pamphlet that said Japan “is not immune from international terrorism”, pointing out that there are Islamic communities in Japan, and that these communities of foreign residents may be exploited by extremists in the future. Since, the police has

³⁵⁵ Komai, *Migrant workers in Japan*, 10.

³⁵⁶ Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

³⁵⁷ Tanada, as quoted in Alex and Matsutani, *Islamic community lays down roots*.

³⁵⁸ Sakurai, “Muslims in Contemporary Japan”.

³⁵⁹ Miura and Matsumoto, as referenced in Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

³⁶⁰ Kyodo News, *Defense policy to outline more active stance*, The Japan Times Online, December 5, 2010, <http://bit.ly/iicag> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).

³⁶¹ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 217.

also contacted Muslim leaders in Japan, asking them about any Islamic terrorist plots in Japan.³⁶² In November 2010, a leak of documents from a counterterrorism unit of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department's Public Security Bureau (antiterrorism intelligence institution formed by the Koizumi government after September 11) stirred controversy in the media.³⁶³ The documents, which were leaked through internet file-sharing software, listed details of “terrorist suspects” including their photographs and extensive personal information including birthplaces, home and work addresses, names and birthdays of spouses, children and associates, personal histories, immigration records and the names of local mosques visited by the ‘suspects’.³⁶⁴ The documents were mostly PDF files, and contained information on more than 600 persons.³⁶⁵

Listed ‘suspects’ were Muslims living and working in Japan, many of them having resided in the country for decades and being married to Japanese nationals. As an example of one such individual, the Japan Times cited the Algerian Mourad Bendjaballah, who after 20 years in Japan found his name on the list for no reason beyond formerly having worked as a travel agent, a profession involving “contact with Arab students, businessmen and diplomats”.³⁶⁶ While the Japan Times in their coverage of the case stressed how this leak could potentially ruin the new lives these innocent ‘suspects’ had created for themselves in Japan, Asahi Shimbun rather emphasized how the case is a “potential disaster that could shatter international trust in Japanese police”.³⁶⁷ Indeed, the case did constitute an international problem as the documents revealed “plans for questioning of Muslims in Japan based on requests from the FBI”.³⁶⁸ Japan Times went as far as calling it an “apparently deliberate data leak” by the police, while Asahi Shimbun stressed that “a roster of police officers [...] as well as the names and address of investigators” were leaked as well.

“The police have broken in a few seconds what it took me 20 years to build,” (...) “My wife and I are good people; we work and pay our taxes and raise our child. Who knows where this file will go?” (Bendjaballah, as cited by the Japan Times)

³⁶² Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

³⁶³ David McNeill, *Muslims in shock over police ‘terror’ leak*, The Japan Times Online, November 9, 2010, <http://bit.ly/iRWdvW> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

³⁶⁴ McNeill, *Muslims in shock over police ‘terror’ leak*.

³⁶⁵ Mainichi Japan, *Leaked terror investigation documents contained info on people helping police probes*, Mainichi Japan, November 1, 2010, <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101101p2a00m0na016000c.html> (last accessed November 15, 2010).

³⁶⁶ McNeill, *Muslims in shock over police ‘terror’ leak*.

³⁶⁷ Asahi Shimbun, *Anti-terrorism data leaked on Net*, Asahi Shinbun, November 2, 2010, <http://bit.ly/kthD2a> (last accessed May 9, 2011)

³⁶⁸ Asahi Shimbun, *Anti-terrorism data leaked on Net*.

At the end of the same month, the Tokyo publisher Dai-San Shokan already released a 469-page book of leaked documents, containing personal data about police officers and Muslim residents. The publisher argued that since this data already was accessible to anyone through the Internet, there were no moral issues with printing the volume.³⁶⁹ This view was not shared by a group of 13 Muslims, who made the news towards the end of the year by filing a suit against the publisher, demanding a halt of the publication of the book as well as 42.9 million yen in damages, for infringing on their privacy. The groups' attorney emphasized how misinformation in the leaked police reports contributed to undeservingly ruining these Muslims' reputation.³⁷⁰

Although a recent reinforcement of the 'terrorist image' of Muslims has been seen in these news stories, one cannot really say that Muslims have any widespread demonized 'terrorist' image in Japan in the same way as they have in Europe. In Japan, it is much more common to single out Pyongyang-affiliated *zainichi* as terrorists. The foreign minority group with the strongest 'terrorist' image definitely is North Koreans: To the general Japanese, the very real and close threat of neighbor country North Korea, as well as fear-spreading cases such as the abduction of Japanese nationals by North Koreans, makes the 'North Korean threat' much more relevant to Japanese citizens than Islamist extremist terrorism happening on European and North American soil. Indeed, the recent disclosures of terrorism investigations on Muslim citizens of Japan showed that the reason for the investigations were requests directed to Japan from the US, not domestic concerns about Islamic terrorism. Sakurai argues that while some Muslims in Japan are frustrated about the suspicion directed towards them since September 11, there is currently no indication of Japan's muslim population radicalizing, or constituting any threat to society.³⁷¹

5.4 Image of Muslims IV - 'Backwards' / 'uncivilized'

Miura quotes a Japanese high school textbook which says "the belief and doctrine of Islam has been established in severe natural conditions (of the desert) and characteristics of strictness and strength, quite different from the Japanese preference for mildness, warmth, and ambiguity."³⁷² This, bafflingly enough, matches the Iwakura Mission's environmental determinist inspired judgements on the peoples of Islamic countries. Does indeed Japanese images of Islam regard the 'Islamic

³⁶⁹ Kyodo News, *Leaked antiterror info published*, The Japan Times Online, November 28, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jSgrkv> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).

³⁷⁰ Mainichi Japan, *Muslims file suit against publisher over book on leaked police anti-terrorism documents*, The Mainichi Daily News, December 25, 2010, <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101225p2a00m0na005000c.html> (last accessed January 19, 2011).

³⁷¹ Sakurai, "Muslims in Contemporary Japan".

³⁷² Miura, as referenced in Penn, "Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context".

civilization’ and its people to be shaped by the climate of deserts? While this question may be hard to answer, one can note a general tendency of believing the cultures of Islamic countries to be harsher, less complex, or even less ‘civilized’ than those of Japan - in other words, ‘backwards’.

As touched upon earlier, it can be argued that Japanese modernity discourse hierarchically places the cultures of countries from regions such as the Middle East and South Asia below the culture of Japan, which again in the global competition only ranks below Western culture in terms of being ‘modern’ and ‘civilized’. Japan prides itself on being more ‘civilized’ than other non-Western countries, yet at the same time still struggles with the inferiority complex of not being Western. Islamic countries may also be associated with economic inferiority: One respondent in Onishi’s qualitative study on foreign Muslim workers, a Bangladeshi who had stayed in Japan for nine years, expressed he was tired of “being seen with the image of a poor country”.³⁷³ Another respondent, a Pakistani who had lived in Japan for almost ten years, claimed that such negative images were connected to his physical appearances, and that Europeans and Americans were judged differently. A survey among high school students in Japan revealed that 53 % of them associated Islam with backwards regions of the world.³⁷⁴

Such survey results, and Sakurai’s comments about Japanese perceptions of Islam as a backwards third-world religion versus Christianity as a symbol of modernity, indicates a widespread impression of Islamic countries as associated with ‘backwardness’. No mere post-war phenomena, this once again matches the views of the Iwakura Mission’s impressions of the Western and Islamic worlds. To some Japanese, the West may be viewed as the pinnacle of modernity, while the Islamic World represents something Japan decided to distance itself from during its modernization. That which is not Western nor Japanese, is easily labeled as more or less “barbaric”. However, when Japanese may perceive individual Muslim workers from countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and Iran as more “barbaric” than themselves, a more important factor than their religious affiliation might in fact be their physical looks.

5.5 Image of Muslims V - Bearded man rather than man of faith

In the debate of immigrant minorities in Western Europe, great emphasis is usually placed on their religious affiliation, but Japanese are generally less interested in the religious grouping ‘Muslim’,

³⁷³ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 223.

³⁷⁴ Miura and Matsumoto, as referenced in Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

and more interested in grouping people according to physical characteristics. This can be contrasted to South Korea, whose citizens generally have a stronger religious consciousness: While Japan never became Christianized, Christianity has played a major role in South Korea's modern history. In the highly secularized and religion-indifferent Japan, the important parameter for classifying foreigners is physical appearance, while in Korea, both physical appearance and religious affiliation appear to be important parameters.

Disinterest in religion

The reason why Japanese are less interested in religious affiliation are manifold. Japan is today a highly secularized society, with a sharp separation of church and state. Looking at the role of religion in modern-age Japan, it has not always been this way. Tokugawa era leaders required each citizen to make an annual official denial of Christianity,³⁷⁵ to ensure they did not become agents of Western imperialism. In this period, Buddhism was of deep official importance in society: by law, every household had to be affiliated with a Buddhist temple and every citizen had to be given a Buddhist funeral. This relationship between temples and households led to the compulsory *danka* system, a system where households financially support a designated Buddhist temple in return for spiritual services.³⁷⁶ The system was voluntary before the Tokugawa Period – its origins can be traced back to the Heian period (794 - 1185)³⁷⁷ – and the system is again voluntary today, but the Tokugawa shogunate turned it into a system of citizen registration, and a way to control the public. For the Buddhist establishment, the system was a practical way to ensure its survival in this early modern period of Japan's.³⁷⁸

In the Meiji period, the new constitution stated that every citizen was to have religious freedom, as long as the religious practice does not conflict with citizens' public duties.³⁷⁹ At the same time, however, the nationalistic Meiji elite worked to institutionalize the Japan-native shinto religion as the new *de facto* 'national religion' in favor of the 'exogenous' religion of buddhism that had dominated in the Tokugawa Period. Shinto eventually was strongly exploited by the oligarchs of the Empire of Japan until its dissolution, when the new (and still active) 1946 Japanese Constitution formally completely separated religion and state. The current constitution bans the

³⁷⁵ Ian Reader, *Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1991), 86.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Kenneth A. Marcure, "The *Danka* System", *Monumenta Nipponica*, Volume 40 (1985).

³⁷⁸ Nam-lin Hur, *Death and social order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, anti-Christianity, and the danka system* (Harvard: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007).

³⁷⁹ National Diet Library, *The constitution of the Empire of Japan*, <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c02.htm> (last accessed April 15 2011).

State from teaching religion in the education system, and from privileging certain religions or allowing them to exercise any political authority. Individuals are guaranteed religious freedom, never to be compelled to take part in any religious rituals.³⁸⁰

Penn argues that while Buddhism and Shinto have very deep roots in Japan, Japanese society simultaneously is remarkably secular. Religion's role in daily lives is very different in Japan compared to the role of Islam in daily life that Makino describes in the article posted on *Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji*. Except for those few following new religions, most Japanese don't perform daily religious practices or "concern themselves with broad philosophical questions regarding the meaning of life or the nature of existence".³⁸¹ Religion is rather a part of tradition, and does for most Japanese not at all need to provide an all-encompassing fixed package of solutions to all of life's sides and questions: The average Japanese incorporate elements of rituals of both Shinto and Buddhism, and sometimes also Christianity, making few distinctions among them. One may have a coming-of-age day at a shinto temple, a wedding at a Christian church (the way they do in Western movies), and finally leave this world in a Buddhist burial. When going to a shrine or temple, most Japanese will not care much about which is which, and which god they are praying to. The rituals, practices and events at religious sites are well attended, but most Japanese are quite uninterested in discussing religious beliefs. Showing strong interest in religion is frowned upon, and so are religious symbols - except for in festivals.

In Japanese society, interference of religion in social gatherings is generally accepted if the social gathering consists of people interconnected by personal in-group ties - for example, if a gathering of friends and family uses a buddhist priest at a funeral, or a company uses a shinto priest to purify a construction site - but if the social gathering is organized by any form of polity - may it be a national, prefectural or municipal event, or even a public school, the intermeddling of a priest or of religious rituals would be likely to cause public outrage.

Emphasis on physical looks

At least until the terrorist attacks on the U.S. in 2001, Japanese in general hardly had any opinions on Muslims as a group.³⁸² When judging foreigners from Islamic countries, religious factors are in Japan often considered less interesting than factors such as nationality, race and physical looks. Penn argues that Muslims as a group face no more problems than the average foreigner in Japan,

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Penn, "Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context".

³⁸² Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim", 233.

but that they as individuals may face more problems based on their looks. He cites dark skin and beard as physical characteristics that are not perceived well in Japan, and the *hijab* as the corresponding negatively received physical characteristic for women, as it is often associated with backwards oppression of women.³⁸³ Onishi argues that because most Muslims workers in Japan stand out physically and culturally, their everyday life is very different, and “probably more difficult” than the lives of foreign workers whose looks are closer to the Japanese’s.³⁸⁴ Associating Muslims with beards seems to be a widespread image: a survey among high school students indicated that their image of Islam was a religion practiced by bearded men living in desert areas.³⁸⁵ Penn’s comments about Muslims’ beard being a physical characteristic not well received in Japan can be traced back to deep-rooted Japanese perceptions of extensive facial hair being ‘barbaric’.

The concept of barbarians in Japan can be traced back to the substantial import of Chinese concepts between the sixth and eighth century. In China, the popular image of barbarians has traditionally been hairy beings with uncivilised and primitive ways.³⁸⁶ Early Chinese accounts of a breed of hairy people in Japan might possibly be a mention of the *ainu* people of Japan’s northernmost island Hokkaido, who were eventually to be regarded as Japan’s barbarians.³⁸⁷ Early 1300s Japanese accounts of ‘foreign’ barbarians in Japan’s frontiers described them as hairy, growing hair all over their bodies.³⁸⁸ Similarly, 1500s accounts by Japanese describe the land “to the north of Japan” as “inhabited by huge, bearded natives”.³⁸⁹ 1700s accounts still emphasised their hairy looks, one stating that “[t]heir bodies are most hairy and their eyebrows a single line; some even grow body hair like bears”.³⁹⁰ The *ainu* were frowned upon because of their facial hair, and in the periods the shogunate would enforce Japanization on them and have their beards shaven, often forcibly³⁹¹. Today, extensive facial or body hair is arguably still a sign of backwardness. In my next section on images of Muslim immigrants, I will further elaborate on the interesting history of relation between the Japanese mainstream and the *ainu* minority.

³⁸³ Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

³⁸⁴ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 219.

³⁸⁵ Matsumoto, as referenced in Penn, “Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context”.

³⁸⁶ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 27.

³⁸⁷ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 28-29.

³⁸⁸ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 30.

³⁸⁹ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 31.

³⁹⁰ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 42.

³⁹¹ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 41.

5.6 Image of Muslims VI - the entertainingly different curiosity on TV

In Onishi's qualitative research on Muslim workers in Japan, she in several interviews found that respondents emphasized how they are not really that different from Japanese. Stressing how they also have started to like food like *misō* soup, raw fish and *nattō* (fermented beans), they requested social acceptance, claiming they were "almost like the Japanese".³⁹² Indeed, as a foreign minority individuals grow accustomed to their new surroundings, they will often initially feel that the gap between their culture and that of the host society, which they may or may not have felt before, is decreasing. For some Muslim immigrants, it may be frustrating when mainstream society do not share their view, and in some instances not only deny their similarity, but over-emphasize aspects of them that are different. Or, in the Japanese case I will demonstrate next, even invent new characteristics of 'otherness'.

Over-emphasis on 'otherness': Representations of foreigners in television shows

In talk shows, comedy shows, documentary and 'reality' type shows on Japanese TV, foreigners living in Japan is a curiosity often exploited for entertainment. While this is hardly unique to Japan - the different foreigner is a source of comedy on television in the US and Europe as well - there are certain peculiar features of these TV shows that makes them worthy of a closer look. While many of these representations of foreigners are fairly accurate and respectful, there are also many instances of completely misleading representations – often in the cases where the foreigner is not exotic or different enough to be entertaining. In those cases, 'otherness' is increased by exaggerating - or even inventing completely new - cultural features.

In this [\[http://bit.ly/gcbHKO\]](http://bit.ly/gcbHKO) 2008 clip from the late-night comedy show *Mayobra-ha*, two comedians visit the international dormitory Osaka English House, where young students and workers, foreign as well as Japanese nationals, live alongside each other. The comedians come up with an entertaining challenge to get the most value out of their visit – a challenge to eat 'disgusting' foreign food. The foreigners are forced to eat the most shocking Japanese food the comedians can come up with: *umeboshi* (pickled plums) and *nattō*. These are indeed known to be unpopular among first-time visitors to Japan, i.e. tourists, but it's quite rare for foreigners living in Japan for extended periods to not become accustomed to such common foods. It's safe to say that the majority of long-time exchange students and English teachers in Japan find these dishes quite

³⁹² Onishi, "Becoming a better muslim", 224-225.

ordinary. The *Mayobra-ha* team here display the typical Japanese tendency of perceiving foreigners as temporary guests unaccustomed to Japan.

In return, the Japanese comedians are to eat disgusting food from the foreigners' home countries – notably a Swedish girl's *surströmming* (sour-tasting canned fish with a distinct smell) and a Canadian boy's *spaghetti with maple syrup* - a dish that does not exist. It's apparent that an exotic and extreme dish is invented by the TV producers due to none of the other residents having any exciting local food that could match the Swedish girl's *surströmming*. The Japanese comedians scream with comical exaggeration about the stench of the *surströmming*, and then next – not surprisingly – complain about the disgusting combination of maple syrup and spaghetti. I later had the opportunity to talk to the two Canadians who appeared in this show, and they both with a smile on their face confirmed to me that there most definitely does not exist any such dish in Canada³⁹³.

Another example of shows that exaggerate foreigners' differentness is *Koko ga hen da yo Nihonjin* ("Japanese people: this is odd!"), which ran from 1998 to 2002. In this show, TV stars Takeshi Kitano and Teri Ito would hold debates with a crowd of one hundred foreigners, who were all pointing out aspects of Japan that they supposedly found strange. The topics discussed were always controversial, like war, homosexuality, neo nazism etc., and consequently there was always a lot of screaming and verbal attacks involved. The foreigners had their national flags depicted on their chests, and claimed to be normal English teachers or company workers stationed in Japan, voicing their own private opinion. It has however since been revealed that the majority of foreigners appearing in the show were from the Tokyo based casting agency Inagawa Motoko Office, which specialises in foreign 'talents'.³⁹⁴ In other words, they were performers, and few of them were actually working in Japan and participating in Japanese society in a normal manner. With the extreme opinions many of these foreigners were staged to utter, while dressed in clothes displaying the national flag of their home country, they undoubtedly generated prejudices against foreigners, and spread exaggerated stereotypes.

The hit TV show *Karakuri TV*, hosted by Sanma Akashiya, which runs in prime time³⁹⁵ on Saturdays, has through the years had several regular features with foreigners as an invaluable elements of entertainment. In one past feature, called *KARAKURI FUNNIEST JAPANESE*, foreigner celebrity Thane Camus asked questions to foreigners in English, which they in turn had to answer in

³⁹³ Yomiuri Telecasting Corporation, *Mayobra-ha*, 2008 episode uploaded on YouTube, <http://bit.ly/gcbHKO> (last accessed May 11, 2011).

³⁹⁴ Yukio Yanagisawa, *Nihonjin wa hontō ni 'Sekai no kiwaremono' na no ka?* (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2009).

³⁹⁵ *Karakuri TV* runs on Saturdays from 7 to 8 PM, which is the broadcasting time known as *gōrudēn taimu*, "Golden Time", in Japan. It is considered the absolute prime time.

Japanese. The entertainment value and humour stemmed from, as the name makes so explicit, how funny these foreigners' Japanese language mistakes were.

The foreigners were ridiculed for their failed attempts at *imitating* something reserved for Japanese - speaking the Japanese language. This fits into *nihonjin-ron*'s idea of Japanese as an unlearnable language, exclusive to the Japanese people. The show has been subject to criticism, as it is suspected for staging many of these funny so-called mistakes. Nigerian Bobby Ologun, who started regularly appearing in *FUNNIEST JAPANESE*, became famous through his hilarious mistakes. A major celebrity in Japan today, his rise to fame was due to mistakes such as confusing the word *tensai* ("genius") with the word *hentai* ("pervert"). The show, and Bobby himself, eventually became criticised for staging his so-called mistakes. Bobby was exotified by the show, and also exaggerated his own difference, by doing more foreigner mistakes than were natural or convincing. In a 2009 quiz show where Bobby starred as a guest, viewers were allowed to vote on different aspects of Bobby's life via phone. On the question of "does Bobby intentionally make mistakes when speaking Japanese?", as many as 90 % of callers voted yes.³⁹⁶

Why did *Karakuri TV*'s producers wish to exaggerate Bobby's foreignness? And why did Bobby choose to play along? The easy answer to both of those questions of course is: both parties profited from it. But the fact that it was so profitable means that there is a big market demand for representations of foreigners as drastically different from Japanese. So the more complex underlying question is: Why is there such a big demand for representations of very 'different' foreigners in Japan? As stressed throughout my thesis, the combination of rapidly increasing *kokusaika* (internationalization) and restless search for a constant and 'true' Japanese identity (as opposed to 'false' elements) in the last decades has caused a popular climate easily leading to over-emphasis on the 'differentness' of those who clearly are not part of this group - newly arrived foreigners.

As not only the uniqueness, but also the 'sameness' of the Japanese continues to be emphasized in Japanese culture discourse (and through *nihonjin-ron*), foreigners are simultaneously and consequentially emphasised as very different from Japanese. This way, a simplified 'us' is created through the contrast to a simplified 'them'. Exaggerated exotification of foreigners, and the artificial widening of the 'cultural gap' between Japanese and foreigners when contrasting them, is a tool of cultural nationalism, and continues to be a contributing factor to the fear of cultural *masatsu* (friction), and thus a major obstacle to increased acceptance for immigrants in Japan. Especially in

³⁹⁶ Japanprobe, *Bobby Ologun profits by betting against Japanese tolerance for international marriages*, Japanprobe, August 15, 2009, <http://www.japanprobe.com/2009/08/15/bobby-ologun-profits-by-betting-against-japanese-tolerance-for-international-marriages/> (last accessed May 10, 2011)

the media of Japan, there seems to be a tendency of exaggerating the ‘differentness’ of foreigners: When contrasted to ‘the Japanese’, the aspects of the foreigner that make her or him different are over-emphasised, and new parameters of difference might even be freely invented.

One can argue that over-emphasis on differences between different cultures or nations that we can find in shows such as *Mayobra-ha*, *Koko ga hen da yo Nihonjin* and *Karakuri TV* originate from a Japanese fascination with ‘the other’ that has long roots, and it will surely take time to abolish the exotified and romanticised ideas of the ‘other’, or the foreign, that these shows know to exploit. These TV shows emphasise foreigners’ differentness, and contrasts them to mainstream society’s culture, in a way that makes it hard for them to find acceptance in, and inclusion into, mainstream society. Looking back at the Tokugawa Period’s views on the ‘otherness’ of non-Japanese, one can notice an interesting similarity in the exaggeration of the difference of ‘foreigners’, and the way this was explicitly used to exclude them from society, but also an interesting trend of sometimes halting this emphasis on difference and rather encourage complete assimilation, if this was in the political elite’s interest.

The Tokugawa Period’s *ka-i* beliefs

When the Japanese’s worldview was still heavily influenced by and similar to China, their view of modernity had a spacial perspective of core and periphery. In the 1700s, the system of beliefs called *ka-i* exaggerated ‘foreign’ groups for political ends.³⁹⁷ *Ka-i* means China-barbarians, and it encompasses a dichotomised distinction between the civilised Self and the barbarian Other³⁹⁸. After adopting a worldview included by the West’s, emphasis shifted away from spacial distance and towards emphasis on time: The less modern peoples were seen as lagging behind in time after modernized peoples such as the Japanese, in an evolutionist inspired philosophy. In the period of *ka-i*, the core of Japan, the *Wajin* (“Japanese Persons”), saw the northern frontier and its *ainu* people, as well as the Ryukyu Kingdom to the south, and its *ryukyu* people, as peripheries settled by ‘foreigners’. The nomadic *ainu* people were considered “barbarians”.³⁹⁹ The Matsumae clan was, starting with the end of the 1500s and all the way until Japan’s official annexation of Hokkaido in the Meiji Period, the clan of *wajin* who had the most formal contact with the *ainu*, being the clan assigned to reign over the southernmost part of Hokkaido.

³⁹⁷ Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan*, p. 18.

³⁹⁸ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 28.

³⁹⁹ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 2.

Under these conditions, the peripheral *ainu* were constantly subject to various shifting policies directed either from the Matsumae clan or from the shogunate in Honshu, the core of *wajin* power. In periods, the latter wanted to impose forced assimilation upon the *ainu*, as part of a strategy to mobilise them as allies against Russia.⁴⁰⁰ As the Russian threat ended, however, policy shifted to the complete opposite⁴⁰¹: The *ainu*, who had been forcibly Japanized, were suddenly forbidden to learn the Japanese language, and to wear characteristically Japanese clothing such as straw sandals and straw raincoats⁴⁰², and were also discouraged from taking up farming. Although they did speak entirely different languages and indeed had rather different traditions, customs and lifestyles as well, their Otherness was clearly exaggerated, and they were denied assimilation or integration into Japan, or attempts at *imitating* the Japanese way. Morris-Suzuki describes this policy as “magnifying the exotic character of the peripheral societies”, as the relationships with the *ainu* and *Ryukyu* “represented the subordination of foreign people to Japanese domination”.⁴⁰³

When Russia was perceived as a threat by the shogunate again, forced assimilation was introduced once more,⁴⁰⁴ showing the flexible nature of the concepts of ‘foreigner’ and ‘non-foreigner’ in this historical period, where political agendas were a deciding factor. It has to be admitted, however, that it would be a stretch to suggest that the *ainu* as an ethnic majority went back and forth between being called ‘Japanese’ and ‘non-Japanese’. The truth is that they were never called *wajin* - arguably the closest concept to ‘Japanese’ that existed at the time - but merely “Japanised natives”.⁴⁰⁵ There was still a notion of them essentially being barbarians.

The foreign land of Hokkaido was fully turned into a colony by Japan in 1868, the first year of the Meiji Restoration.⁴⁰⁶ The Ryukyu Islands and their native people experienced a similar history, as the Satsuma clan was assigned to rule over the islands in the late 1500s, and the islands soon following the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, year 1879, were formally annexed as part of the Empire of Japan.⁴⁰⁷ Strong and long-lasting consistent assimilation efforts of these two groups didn’t begin before the Meiji Period. Today, both the *ainu* and *ryukyu* people are by common sense, and by the homogeneity ideology, *Japanese* in every sense of the word, and together with all other

⁴⁰⁰ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 46.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan*, p. 18

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 47.

⁴⁰⁵ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 47-48.

⁴⁰⁶ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 8.

⁴⁰⁷ Paul Spickard, *Race and Nation: Ethnic Systems in the Modern World* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 121.

Japanese in other islands make up the ‘single-race’ homogeneous group called Japanese. Their different cultural heritage is rarely stressed by the government, but the tourism industry utilises it to attract visitors. The Japanese state since 2008 does admit that they are a minority group.⁴⁰⁸ Arguably, they officially consider them a cultural minority, but not a racial or ethnic minority, as the image of Japan as a ‘single-race’ or ‘single-ethnicity’ nation still stands strong.

The ‘otherness’ of foreigners exaggerated in illustrations in Tokugawa

In 1640, a “Chart of All the Nations” was produced in Japan. It depicted forty different ethnic groups, from Southeast Asia, East Asia, Europe, along with a few representations of Americans and Africans, each “illustrated by a man and woman wearing national dress”.⁴⁰⁹ Morris-Suzuki, referring to Toby,⁴¹⁰ describes that the period saw a wide fascination with foreigners, “stimulated by the arrival of the exotic Europeans”, and that this fascination took other forms as well, including dramas and pageants where participants “appeared dressed as ‘foreigners’ of various shapes and forms”.⁴¹¹ Traveler’s accounts of the exotic and different lands of the *ainu* and *ryukyu* people were also popular in this period, due to the public’s hunger for tales about the ‘different’ foreigner. In the illustrated books *Ishū Retsuzou*, released in 1790, and *Ezo Seikei Zusesu*, released in 1823⁴¹², *ainu* are portrayed as exaggeratedly hairy.⁴¹³ This exaggeration of the non-Japanese’s barbarian otherness can also be found in illustrations from the same period of Westerners, with emphasis upon long noses, red hair and hairiness, and the Africans and Javanese working on their ships, who were usually portrayed as devils.⁴¹⁴

One can find similarities between the fascination with foreigners, and their ‘otherness’, in the Tokugawa period illustrations and in the three TV shows *Mayobra-ha*, *Koko ga hen da yo Nihonjin* and *Karakuri TV*, all presenting the foreigner for display as something entertaining and exciting and exaggerating it. Presenting foreigners as exaggeratedly different from Japanese adds fuel to *nihonjin-ron*’s narrative of uniqueness, and cultural nationalism’s construction of a national ‘us’

⁴⁰⁸ Minority Rights Group International: *World Directory of Minorities: Japan Overview*, Minority Rights Group International, June 2008, <http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=5358&tmpl=printpage> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).

⁴⁰⁹ Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan*, p. 14.

⁴¹⁰ Ronald Toby, “The ‘Indianness’ of Iberia and Changing Japanese Iconographies of Other”, In *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, edited by S. B. Schwartz, 323-351 (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁴¹¹ Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan*, p. 14.

⁴¹² Teisuke Murakami, *Ezo seikei zusesu*, 1990 reproduction of original work from 1823 (Sapporo: Hokkaidō Shuppan Kikaku Sentā 1990).

⁴¹³ Siddle, *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*, 49.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

through emphasising the ‘us’ group’s uniqueness while exaggerating or even inventing ‘different’ features of the ‘others’. One can observe clear and confusing contradictions between media’s exaggeration and celebration of foreigners’ ‘otherness’, and the assimilation pressure Muslim immigrants experience from Japanese citizens, which on the contrary requires them to eradicate their ‘otherness’. The example of the Tokugawa shogunate’s shifting of policies between over-emphasis on ‘otherness’ and assimilation pressure to demonstrate ‘sameness’ reveals how in the right political climate, a previously emphasised ‘otherness’ can be downplayed later.

When foreigners in TV shows like *Karakuri TV* try to behave like the Japanese and speak the Japanese language, their attempts of ‘imitating’ Japanese is ridiculed. The combination of the belief of Japan being a homogeneous nation populated by one single race, and the belief that the behavior of foreigners, i.e. those of non-Japanese race, is drastically different, can easily lead to the belief that foreigners are different ‘by nature’, and Japanese ‘by nature’ behaving like Japanese. Consequentially, when foreigners transcend their foreignness and try to do things ‘the Japanese way’, it is perceived as a mere *imitation*, while when a Japanese does the same, it is rather an *original*. Nishikawa Nagao, referring to Sakaguchi⁴¹⁵, argues that one should re-examine the meaning of imitation and demolish the myth of originality.⁴¹⁶ He argues that since cultures constantly interact and transform, it’s meaningless to “seek pure culture or cultural identity” and separate cultures divided by frontiers, such as ‘Japanese culture’.⁴¹⁷

One respondent in Onishi’s qualitative study on foreign Muslim workers, a Pakistani who had stayed in Japan for almost ten years, blamed the media for Japanese not seeing him for who he really is. People being “uneducated” and believing what the media told them, was for him a major concern.⁴¹⁸ In a political climate that encouraged and celebrated the Japanese society’s rich cultural and ethnic diversity, combined with an educational system that taught lessons on foreign minorities’ contributions and ‘belongingness’ in society from an early age on, the interest in dubious, exaggerative and misinforming TV shows like *Mayobra-ha*, *Koko ga hen da yo Nihonjin* and *Karakuri TV* would surely decrease.

Similar TV shows exist in other Asian countries as well. The Korean show “Global Talk Show”, also known as *Misuda*, features a panel of foreign women residing in South Korea (usually foreign students) who discuss experiences in Korea, as well as issues of culture, in the Korean

⁴¹⁵ Sakaguchi, as cited in Nishikawa Nagao, “Two Interpretations of Japanese Culture”, in *Multicultural Japan*, edited by Gavan McCormack et al, 245-264 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

⁴¹⁶ Nishikawa Nagao, “Two Interpretations of Japanese Culture”, 263.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Onishi, “Becoming a better muslim”, 223.

language⁴¹⁹. The Vietnamese show *Chuyện phiếm* uses the exact same concept, and an episode can be watched in its entirety on [<http://bit.ly/euuTLT>].

Bad PR

Simplified, inauthentic, staged and incorrect representation of foreigners featuring exaggerated or fictional cultural features, can spread misinformation at best, and at worst it can be very unfortunate ‘PR’ for immigrants. Such ‘bad PR’ can be held responsible for some of the marginalization of, and suspicion towards, foreigners that we see in Japan today. Not only media, but also politicians can be held accountable for the spread of ‘bad PR’: Arudou argues that while there are numerous benefits connected to the presence of citizens of foreign background in Japan, media and politicians have focused too much on irrelevant minor problems like how they “can’t sort their garbage”⁴²⁰, and he encourages the government to make clear statements about how immigration is good for Japan.

Like touched upon by Kim earlier, it appears most Japanese do not know the reasons for, and realities of, migration. Conservative Japanese media might also depict foreigners as a source of crime and social unrest, just like the aforementioned police posters. The police at times gives the impression of regarding ‘internationalization’ of society as a threat to public order, talking about protecting citizens from crimes caused by outsiders, despite the non-existence of statistics indicating ‘outsiders’ commit more crimes than the average person in Japan. The government may do this as well: the MOJ in December 2010, spread fear about “serious crimes committed by foreign nationals”, and even suggesting it as the reason why Japan no longer is known as “the safest country in the world”.⁴²¹ Foreigners’ rights citizen groups in Japan have combated the bad PR from politicians and media depicting them as criminals by writing books that expose their scapegoating techniques.⁴²²

Roberts adds a different perspective: rather than focusing on the negative effects of domestic news stories on foreign citizens in Japan, she argues that Japanese officials’ negative tone towards immigration possibly can be blamed on bad PR from international news. September 11, Germany and France’s unrest with their migrant populations and the 2005 terror bombings in the UK are cited

⁴¹⁹ *Global Talk Show*, <http://www.kbs.co.kr/2tv/enter/suda/> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

⁴²⁰ Debito Arudou, *A level playing field for immigrants*, The Japan Times Online, December 1, 2009, <http://bit.ly/5qycaA> (last accessed November 10, 2010)

⁴²¹ MOJ, *Recovery of public safety*, MOJ, 2010 <http://www.moj.go.jp/ENGLISH/issues/issues04.html> (last accessed: April 16 2011).

⁴²² Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 773.

as examples of why the Japanese government might be cautious to increase the number of migrants despite the rapid decline in population.⁴²³

Either way, if the trend of inaccurate representation of foreigners does not stop, the consequences might become unfortunate. If this trend continues, while Japan, with its sinking birth rate and alarmingly shrinking working force, simultaneously increases its ‘import’ of foreign labor, the result could be a society with an increasing segregation between the ‘old’ citizens and the ‘new’ - the latter struggling to be included and to find acceptance. A shift does however not seem unlikely, as some positive new trends in contemporary media can be observed: In the television of recent years, foreigners are seen far more frequently as serious commentators on various topics such as sports or the news - which was rare just 5 to 10 years ago.⁴²⁴

The foreigner functioning purely as an exotic curiosity or source of amusement has partly been replaced by the expert commentator foreigner who is taken seriously while he is speaking fluent Japanese. A pioneer in this trend has been the UK-born, Australia-raised Japanese citizen Gregory Clark.⁴²⁵ Not only has he been a regular columnist since 1980 for written publications such as the International Herald Tribune, Nikkei Business, Nikkei Weekly, Mainichi Daily, Toyo Keizai, Tokyo Business Today and Japan Times, but he has also since 1986 made regular TV appearances on the NHK show *Shiten Ronten* (“Points of View”).⁴²⁶ This gives hope for respectful representations of foreign residents in Japanese media, and it will be interesting to follow further developments. Another recent development that brings hope for the future is Japan’s increasing interest in multiculturalism, which I will make a brief account of in the following chapter.

6. Multiculturalism

6.1 Towards multiculturalism

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in 2005 launched a study group on the promotion of multiculturalism, which in 2007 released a report suggesting that a *tabunka kyōsei shakai*, “Society of Multicultural Coexistence”, should be developed through the efforts of local governments. The report focused on the overcoming of cultural and linguistic barriers between

⁴²³ Roberts, “Immigration policy”, 776.

⁴²⁴ Willis and Murphy-Shigematsu, “Ethnoscapes and the other”, 310.

⁴²⁵ Gregory Clark, *Gregoryclark.net*, Gregory Clark, www.gregoryclark.net (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

⁴²⁶ Gregory Clark, *Personal History*, <http://www.gregoryclark.net/Gregcv.html> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).

ethnic groups without assistance from the central government.⁴²⁷ However, in order to truly improve the current situation of immigrants, as well as prepare Japan for a future increase in immigrants, I propose developing national-level policies promoting multiculturalism. Political multiculturalism is intrinsically linked to the welfare state, and should thus be considered the task of the central government.

This does not seem unlikely to happen within the foreseeable future: Decision makers both within Japanese politics and economy are currently observing immigration topics in the West, and studying “best practice examples” as well as problematic experiences with migration, in European countries such as Germany and France, as well as countries like Canada.⁴²⁸ I believe that the continued pursuit of multiculturalism policies is the best move for Japan and its future, for reasons I will elaborate on in my next and final chapter. Before moving on, however, I will discuss some of the potential challenges the introduction multiculturalism could face, and why it may not necessarily always fruitful to compare Japan to the West when discussing multiculturalism.

6.2 Japan’s mixture of cultures

Cultures constantly interact and transform. The mainstream culture of Japan, like that of all societies not completely isolated, includes a wide range of formerly exogenous elements from a number of different sources: The Japanese dish *tempura* originally stems from Portugal,⁴²⁹ Japanese green tea (often called *nihoncha*, “Japanese tea”) was originally introduced from China, Buddhist values were spread to Japan from the Indian continent, the regular Japanese TV viewer watches not just Japan-produced shows, but also shows imported from countries such as South Korea and the US, the Japanese language is written in the Chinese alphabet *Kanji* and two syllabus alphabets, *Katakana* and *Hiragana*, that in their looks deviate from *Kanji* - the list goes on.

Of course, it is not an easy task to make this point to a multiculturalism-sceptic Japanese nationalist: In the discourse of cultural nationalism, the past is represented in a way that gives the impression of a historic cultural consistency and continuity within the nation’s borders, and concepts that are actually foreign are incorporated into this discourse as unique to the nation, their exogenous nature censored. During the 2005 opening ceremony of the Kyushu National Museum, which displays the influences from countries such as China and Korea on Japanese cultural

⁴²⁷ Kibe, “Immigration and Integration Policies in Japan: At the Crossroads of the Welfare State and the Labour Market”, 58.

⁴²⁸ Vogt and Roberts, *Migration and Integration - Japan in Comparative Perspective*, 9.

⁴²⁹ Takashi Morieda, *Tracking Down Tempura*, The World of Kikkoman, 2011, <http://bit.ly/7oxtVvk> (last accessed May 10, 2011).

heritage, Taro Aso praised Japan for having "one culture, one civilization, one language, and one ethnic group," and stated that it was the only such country in the world⁴³⁰.

6.3 Multiculturalism and rights in an East Asian nation

It may appear easy to compare the situation of multiculturalism in Japan to that of Europe, as nations like Italy and Germany also for long stretches of history held an image of themselves as more or less ethnically 'homogeneous', and only relatively recently started accepting foreign newcomers. Martellone, discussing attitudes towards immigrants in Italy, argues that old residents are containing their negative feelings towards newcomers since the country fairly recently experienced the horrors of World War Two, and thus has a "deep seated revulsion against any form of racism", and "being a very young democracy, has matured rapidly a strong sense that civil rights and basic social rights belong to all".⁴³¹ Comparing Italy to Japan, they do have much in common besides being relatively ethnically homogenous until recently: Both are important world powers and young democracies, both were Axis powers in World War Two, and the two are experiencing similar demographic problems urging immigration: low birth rate and greying of society.

However, one major difference is that Japan has not processed its former role as an Axis power in the same way, possibly indicating historical and regional differences between European and East Asian nations that cannot be ignored. One must also not forget that while post-war Europe experienced an influx of former colonial subjects as a consequence of the dissolution of colonies, Japan rather chose to shut former colonial subjects out. Further comparing to Martellone's description of Italy, Japan arguably has not developed any deep resentment against racism, nor any widespread beliefs in equal social and civil rights for all. On the contrary, Japan's legal system arguably systematically differentiates between different groups of people, assigning them different rights and presupposing they have different roles to play in society.

Shipper argues that Japan's immigration policy categorizes foreigners "hierarchically by race (or nationality), their function in Japanese society, and, sometimes, gender", and that the construction of such policies on behalf of the government is "rooted in a cultural view that certain races and nationalities are uniquely qualified for certain kinds of labor".⁴³² In what he calls a "racial hierarchy", he views *zainichi* and *nikkeijin* as on top, considering their better jobs, salaries and

⁴³⁰ Christopher Reed, *Ghosts of Wartime Japan Haunt Koizumi's Cabinet*, New American Media, November 3, 2005, <http://bit.ly/krMla1> (last accessed May 10, 2011).

⁴³¹ Martellone, "National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States", 11.

⁴³² Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 25.

working conditions compared to other foreign workers. He regards South Asians to be on the bottom, considering their “low-skill jobs, poor pay, and dangerous working environments”.⁴³³ Demonstrating the Japanese government’s hierarchical sorting, Shipper points to the difference from group to group in immigration control laws and integration policies, like the government only targeting inclusion policies towards one specific foreign group, *nikkeijin*. The government prioritizes skilled migrants, and while *nikkeijin* and *zainichi* are allowed to do unskilled work, others are left to be trainees or pushed into the marginalized category of ‘illegal’ worker.⁴³⁴

Indeed, the vast variety of types of immigration statuses in Japan may indicate that a belief in equal social rights and civil rights for all has yet to manifest itself in the country. Another indicator is the lack of a law against racial discrimination. In a regional perspective, however, Japan is hardly unique in this regard, as no such law exists in any East Asian country. South Korea, despite being host to an ever-growing foreign population much like Japan, is yet to introduce policies to actively protect these new citizens. Many liberals and activists in South Korea are advocating the introduction of a such law, but like in Japan it is yet to become a part of mainstream discourse, conservatives having little interest in the subject.⁴³⁵ Nevertheless, in 2009 a South Korean was fined in the first racial insult case of the country, for shouting discriminatory remarks to an Indian national.⁴³⁶ This should be regarded as an important development in East Asia racial discrimination debate.

If Japan or Korea were to become the first East Asian country to introduce laws against racial discrimination, they could become important role models for the securement of human rights in the region. Either way, the trainee system and *nikkeijin*-friendly revised Immigration Law that Shipper criticizes were introduced in 1981 and 1990, respectively. While Japan may not have developed the same anti-racism and pro-egalitarianism sentiments in the aftermath of World War Two as Europe did, the country has nonetheless gone through sweeping social changes and continued development in the decades since the introduction of these two policies, and I argue that the time is ready to revise these policies, as well as clean up their lasting negative aftereffects.

⁴³³ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 26.

⁴³⁴ Shipper, *Fighting for Foreigners*, 26-27.

⁴³⁵ John Smith Tang, *Establishing an anti-discrimination law in an Asian country*, Aliran, 2009, <http://aliran.com/1102.html> (last accessed: April 14, 2011).

⁴³⁶ BBC News, *South Korean fined in first racial insult case*, BBC News, November 27, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8382087.stm> (last accessed February 7th, 2011).

7. Conclusions

If we look at the situation of Japan's current tangibly different immigrants, and the difficulties and challenges they are experiencing, through the case of Muslim immigrants, what observations can be made that could potentially help improve their current situation, as well as prepare Japan for a future increase in immigrants? What possible underlying reasons for these difficulties and challenges can be found?

7.1 Increased immigration, from an increasing number of countries

Japan's current official immigration politics seem to imagine that only skilled immigrants will enter the country, and only temporarily. Japanese may frequently liken the situation of foreigners in Japan with their own situation when traveling abroad, and like the "March in March" activists point out, Japan currently hires foreigners in a 'use and discard' fashion (see section 3.3). Due to the rapid greying of society, this line of politics is turning obsolete. All indications point toward that Japan is currently on the verge of turning to increased immigration as a counter-measure to such demographic problems as *kōreika* og *shōshika*. The remarkable speed of Japan's population decline is due to the three main factors of low birth rate, low migration flow and high life expectancy.

Economic disadvantages to these demographic trends include shrinking consumer markets, as well as cheap labor dependent small- and medium-sized businesses struggling to survive. No industrial nations seem able to drastically turn the birth rate around, so Japan is forced to turn to labor migration the same way others are. While Japan's politicians have been reluctant to make this increasingly unavoidable move, they have been subject to pressure from powerful actors such as the UN, in their 2000 'wake-up call' report, as well as the *Nippon Keidanren*, also urging increased immigration in several reports. Japan's population constantly grew from 1870 to its peak in 2005, but has been declining for the past five years. It appears plausible that it only well be a matter of time until Japan's politicians take action.

Scholars as well as MOJ reports are indicating that Japan's foreign population will not only grow, but also will continue to diversify. Japan has throughout its post-war history attempted to rely on importing 'its own' as labor migrants, first through rural migrants in the immediate post-war decades, then through *nikkeijin* since the revision of the Immigration Law in 1990. They are however running out of immigrants of Japanese ethnicity to import.

Japan has however only per official policy restricted its labor immigration to ‘ethnic Japanese’. In reality, Japan has in the last decades seen *de jura* immigration of ethnic Japanese happening at the same time as substantial *de facto* immigration of foreigners from a diverse number of countries, including the ones from Islamic countries discussed in my thesis. The fact that Japan has become dependent on far more immigrants than just those of Japanese ethnicity is evident when one considers the facts that the country annually imports approximately 90,000 ‘trainees’, and that the number of ‘illegal’ immigrants in Japan counted 78,488 ‘in January 2011. ‘Oldcomers’ came to Japan for historic, ethnic and/or economic reasons, either voluntarily or involuntarily. The ‘newcomer’ group *nikkeijin* came for the same reasons, but voluntarily. All other immigrant groups immigrate to Japan voluntarily and mainly for economic reasons, and it is likely this also will be the case for future immigrants.

7.2 Japan’s foreign Muslims today

Japan’s current foreign Muslim population counts around 60,000 people, and the four biggest nationalities are Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran. Foreign Muslims in Japan are predominantly male, and few of them naturalize. They mostly arrived in the late 1980s and early 90s, entering as ‘trainees’ or via waiver programs that since have been discontinued. Many overstayed their visas and became undocumented workers, but in recent years many have left this ‘illegal’ status, marrying Japanese nationals. Upon marriage, many have firmly settled down in Japan, becoming self-employed businessmen and forming families. The second generation is still very young, usually not even teenagers. The trend of settling down has led to an increase in Muslim prayer facilities and associations: While Japan’s mosques counted only 20 in 2006, the number had grown to 60 in 2010.

Those still ‘illegal’ have in some cases appealed to the immigration office and Supreme court pledging not be deported. Various activist groups are advocating the rights of legal as well as ‘illegal’ immigrants. While a considerable portion of the foreign Muslim population is getting increasingly settled down in Japan, many Muslim foreign workers have been observed to develop stronger Muslim identity or faith after living in Japan for a while. This can be interpreted as part of a trend of ‘giving up’ on acceptance and inclusion into Japanese society. Other indications of this trend include cases of Muslim parents sending their second-generation immigrant children back to the Islamic World for school. The government in 2004 approved the first multilingual *nikkeijin* school, but it seems unlikely that Islamic schools will become common in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, Japanese Muslims show no sign of developing strong Long-Distance Nationalism or of radicalizing, and should constitute no threat of terrorism.

Muslim ‘trainees’ are today working in difficult conditions, but their situation seems to be improving. Official ‘trainees’ have since recently been protected by labor laws, and increasing focus seems to be put on their rights. The government is through its recent measures to improve the working conditions of ‘trainees’ as laborers arguably starting to admit to the trainee program being an official unskilled labor migration scheme. It appears likely that the program will be subject to further changes soon, and possibly even be replaced by a different immigration program.

7.3 Japan’s Muslim foreign minority compared to other foreign minorities in Japan, as well as Muslim minorities in Europe

Tangibly different immigrants like Muslim foreign workers have to face problems that were less of a concern to ‘oldcomer’ immigrants: For example, they may due to their looks be discriminated against, or be recognized as foreigners in public when this is undesirable. ‘Newcomers’ also differ from ‘oldcomers’ in how different the possibilities of transport and communication are for the former compared to what they were like at the time of the latter’s arrival in Japan. Due to developments in transport, e.g. jet air travel allowing frequent travels back home, as well as communication, e.g. technology such as the Internet, today’s immigrants have far greater possibilities for developing transnational identities or Long-Distance Nationalism.

‘Oldcomers’ broke their ties to their former home country in a much more rigid fashion when settling down in a new country, and have through the course of several generations become relatively assimilated into Japanese society. Because their time of arrival is so different, it is unlikely that ‘newcomer’ foreigners will assimilate to the same degree, even if given the same number of generations. Either way, to what degree they will be able to ‘blend into’ Japanese society will be dependent on the degree to which the Japanese state structurally assimilates them.

When attempting to explain conflicts between Muslim immigrants and their European host societies, many point to the historic dichotomy between the Islamic World and Europe. There has never existed a corresponding dichotomy between Japan and the Islamic World. The two had ties on a spiritual and political level through the Pan-Asian and Pan-Islamic movements, and were arguably in the first half of the 20th century considering themselves allies in a world order where the dichotomy from their perspective laid between the Oppressive West and the threatened East.

Like the rest of Asia, the Islamic World looked up to Japan’s successful modernization and victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Anti-Western activists from various countries, including Muslim exiles, gathered in Japan and its occupied territories in this period. Some negative images of Islam

did exist in Japan in this period, as Japan's knowledge of the Islamic World had been mainly based on European sources ever since the 1600s. But the Islamic World had a much more positive view of Japan than it had on the West, and arguably this is to some degree still the case. With the exception of Indonesia, Japan does not have an imperialist past in the Islamic World. Former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso has directly contrasted this to the West's relationship to the Islamic World, and argued Muslims still have more trust in Japanese than in Westerners.

The situation changed after 1945, as Muslim exiles in Japan returned home when they didn't fit into the new 'single-race' Japan. Japan's current foreign Muslim minority is a relatively new group, who didn't arrive until the 1980s. This also makes them different to the Muslim foreign minority groups in Europe, whose origins often reach back to the 1950s. Besides being a newer group, Japan's Muslim minority also differs from those in Europe in that it consists of no refugees, as Japan usually does not accept any. Another difference is that while the first worker immigrants in countries like the UK and France were former colonial subjects, Japan's foreign Muslim population does not consist of any immigrants who gained access to its labor market through prior status as colonial subjects, as Japan developed 'amnesia' about its imperialist past. Although Indonesia was occupied by Japan from 1942 to 1945, and Indonesians are the most populous Muslim nationality in Japan, current Indonesians did not arrive through any privilege policies.

When discussing immigrants from countries such as Pakistan, European immigration discourse usually places great emphasis on these immigrants' religious affiliation to Islam, but Japanese are in general less interested in this parameter, and tend to focus more on grouping people according to physical characteristics. While Muslim's negatively perceived cultural practices, such as for example the practice of wearing *hijab*, in Europe may be blamed on the religion of Islam and be considered in conflict with 'European values' or 'Christian values', in Japan they are rather labeled as 'foreign' cultural practices, and considered in conflict with values of 'modernity'. Europe and Japan dealt with the aftermath of the Second World War in different ways. While it in Europe after the war started to become taboo-ridden to speak of the world's cultures in an evolutionist way, and social darwinian and universalist ideas in public discourse were replaced by relativist ideas about the equal value and nonlinear development of all cultures, the same did not happen in Japanese public discourse.

In Europe, the same underlying ideas arguably dominate, but they are re-branded in a the contemporary accepted terminology: objectionable Muslim values are not 'un-modern', or 'lagging behind' in time, but rather 'un-Christian', or 'un-European'. In Japan, this shift never happened in the same way, so Japanese may be more comfortable describing objectionable Muslim values as

lacking ‘modernity’. The positive side effects of this for Japan’s muslim immigrants is that while the terminology in European discourse may suggest an incompatibility of ‘European values’ and a static religion of Islam that will not resolve by the passage of time, Japanese discourse does not indicate any incompatibility in this way, and may in a carefree manner expect the certain ‘third-world’ or ‘unmodern’ cultural practices by their new citizens to eventually vanish as they live their lives in the modern and advanced civilization of Japan. Arguably, some may also in Europe claim Islamic culture is ‘backwards’, and criticize it of lacking the cultural modernity that Europe acquired through the renaissance. But generally, emphasis on Muslim ‘un-modernity’ is much more prevalent in Japanese discourse than in European.

Also, although a recent reinforcement of the ‘terrorist image’ has been seen in the Japanese news stories on leaked police documents, Muslim foreigners in Japan do not really have a ‘terrorist’ image the way they do in Europe. Japan’s demonized ‘terrorist’ minority is rather the North Korea-affiliated *zainichi*. The instances of terrorism suspicions one has seen have arguably been projected to Japan’s Muslim immigrants through the US. In conclusion, one can say that the way immigrants from Islamic countries are perceived in Japan differs sharply from the way they’re perceived in Western Europe: two of the most common associations linked to them in Western Europe, ‘Muslim’ and ‘terrorist’, are both uncommon in Japan.

The discovery of these historically rooted differences between Western European nations and Japan as hosts societies for Muslim immigrants suggests a context-sensitive approach might be desirable for the future development of multiculturalism- and minority-oriented policies in East Asian nations, rather than merely learning from Europe’s experience with the same group.

7.4 Problems foreign Muslims are experiencing in Japan today

As a foreign and ‘racial’ minority, Muslims in Japan are facing typical problems like discrimination, racism, misconceptions, stereotypes and prejudice, as well as problems common to blue-collar foreign workers. Like other immigrants in Japan, they suffer from a gap in immigration policy and reality: the MOJ claims immigrants are generally in Japan on a temporary basis, and only have access to high-skilled segments of the labor market, but in reality Japan has a substantial number of unskilled worker immigrants, who are becoming increasingly settled down. The Japanese tendency of looking at anything foreign as temporary, and in a situation of being a mere ‘guest’ does not make life in the country easy for those foreign Muslims who have settled permanently.

The government insisting on the official image of Japan as a country not accepting unskilled workers, which simply does not match with reality, eventually leads to unskilled workers being

pushed into the marginal status of ‘illegal’, or undocumented, worker. Life as an ‘illegal’ is difficult: Although ‘illegals’ typically do unpopular and risk-filled ‘3K’ work, they are due to their illegal status not protected by law nor insurance. Foreign Muslim ‘illegals’ also have to fear detection and deportation at all times due to their easily recognizable looks, and can thus not walk carefree in public. Other problems they experience as tangibly different foreigners in Japan include negative judgments of characteristics such as dark skin, beards or *hijabs*. Work problems specific to Muslims can include being denied requests to do lighter work during the *Ramadan* or require multiple breaks for prayer (take many breaks) at work. Some have even been fired for these reasons.

At the workplace and elsewhere, foreign Muslims may struggle with assimilation pressure. This pressure can in Japan, like in certain European nations, mean an unrealistic expectancy of rapid intragenerational assimilation, which can be contrasted to the classic US model of slower intergenerational assimilation. While they this way are expected to behave like Japanese, they at the same time often are emphasized as overly different from Japanese. These contradictory messages can be confusing, and a cause for frustration. Muslim immigrants may after living in Japan for extended periods feel that the gap between their culture and that of the host society is decreasing, but mainstream society seems to disagree, and their ‘otherness’ is often over-emphasized, and new characteristics of ‘otherness’ might even be invented.

Foreign Muslims have expressed concerns about feeling isolated, and not as true members of Japanese society. Failure to include immigrants into society has led to ghettofication in some areas, like the city of Hamamatsu, where Japanese and foreign nationals live separated, and second-generation immigrants, to whom education currently is not compulsory, have poor Japanese language skills and drop out of school. Muslim immigrants may also struggle with a Japanese meta-narrative of homogeneity, which labels them as outsiders. Central to this labeling lays the claims of a ‘single-ethnicity’ Japan, which can come from all sorts of politicians and officials, including those easily labeled as nationalist right-wing conservatives, like Nakasone, but also immigration-friendly bureaucrats like Sakanaka. Immigrant Muslims in Japan, being a marginalized group, lack strong and visible voices in society to negotiate their image. Unable to communicate what they perceive as a correct image of themselves, they consider themselves misunderstood, feeling mainstream society does not understand what life for a Muslim is like, or that the images most people have of them, mostly derived from media, are unbalanced.

Negative and unbalanced images are manifold. In regards to religion, Islam may be perceived as a ‘third-world religion’, in contrast to Christianity and its connotations of modernity. In regards to culture, Japanese may hold images of the cultures of Islamic countries being less

complex and ‘civilized’ than those of Japan, images that to a certain degree can be traced back to the Meiji elite’s view of the Western and Islamic civilizations during Japan’s modernization process. Other negative images can, among other things, include prejudices about foreigners being ‘illegals’ or criminals. Unfortunate images are often spread by media, like television shows presenting simplified, inauthentic, staged and/or incorrect representation of foreigners featuring exaggerated or fictional cultural features, which potentially spread misinformation about, distrust for, and prejudices towards, immigrants.

7.5 Possible reasons for the problems foreign Muslims are experiencing in Japan today

The demography discourse of post-war Japan’s politicians has portrayed the entire Japanese population as culturally or racially ‘homogeneous’, creating a simplified and factually incorrect image. Japan was from 1945 to 2009 almost continually ruled by the conservative and nationalism-leaning LDP. Even though traditional images of Japan have turned increasingly obsolete through economic development and globalization, prominent nationalist politicians have neglected these developments and continued to reinforce the same images. The immigration policies post-war Japanese politicians developed have been marked by a similar dismissal of the realities of Japan’s ongoing shift into a modern post-war multicultural society. When Japan’s blue collar labor shortage became a serious problem in the 1980s the same way it had done in Europe in earlier post-war decades, politicians did not begin much-needed unskilled labor immigration, but rather choose to hold on to the ‘homogeneous’ image of Japan, and introduced a government-endorsed ‘trainee’ program instead, that officially did not introduce immigrants, only temporary ‘trainees’.

The trainee program is a guest worker program in disguise, but exactly due to being in this disguised form, the program leads to problems such as “slave-like” working conditions, which until 2010 even had to be endured without labor law protection. The trainee system has until now been the only legal option for foreigners of non-Japanese descent wanting to work in Japan. Thus, many have opted for the illegal path of overstaying their visa, or entering the country illegally, and finding work as undocumented workers. Many who first come to Japan as trainees eventually transition to the status of illegal worker instead of continuing to endure the program’s harsh working conditions or returning home. One reason why it is so difficult for ‘illegal’ workers to improve their situation is that they cannot complain to public servants about labor laws or human rights being violated, knowing they will be reported for deportation if they do.

The Japanese police frequently generalizes foreigners as 'illegals' to be deported, and also spreads fear about crimes committed by foreigners, as well as the dangers of terrorism from Japan's Muslim population. In 2010, terrorism suspicion of Muslim residents became explicit when a police investigation on Muslim 'terrorism suspects' leaked. This images of Japan's Muslim population being a potential source of terrorism has no basis in reality, but is rather a suspicious image directed from the USA. Media and popular culture may also essentialize Muslims as 'illegals', like in the television series *Ikebukuro West Gate Park*.

The two contradictory messages foreign Muslims face when expected to assimilate to Japanese culture while at the same being emphasized as drastically different from Japanese can be explained by two different, and in this case contradictory, streams of discourses with different historic origins. First, society's expectancy of foreign Muslims discarding their original culture and assimilating may be explained in light of Japan's civilization discourse, which can be traced back to the Meiji Period's modernization. In this period, Japan sought to 'catch up' to Western civilization and, wanting to legitimize its claimed position as second-best, emphasized the shortcomings of non-Western, non-Japanese civilizations. The Japanese discarded the China-influenced worldview of regarding variation in cultures to be due to spacial differences, and adopted a Western-influenced view that explained them through differences in time: less 'civilized' cultures were seen as 'lagging behind' in time, a way of thinking influenced by evolutionism. The unequal statuses of different cultures, and the unequal power relations this causes, may explain the assimilation pressure foreign Muslims experience.

Focus on the 'otherness' of foreigners can be regarded as a legacy of Japan's history of emphasizing 'otherness' of marginalized groups for political means, but also as a consequence of post-war 'homogeneity' discourse, cultural nationalism, *nihonjin-ron*, and the close and racialised link between 'ethnicity' and 'nation', as well as ideals of the state as a family. Possibly a counter-reaction to globalization and rapid economic development, post-war Japan has been marked by a search for a 'true' Japan, which has encompassed emphasis on the 'uniqueness' and 'sameness' of the Japanese people as well as over-emphasis on the 'otherness' of those who are not part of this people.

Nihonjin-ron, the narrative of uniqueness that among other things portrays the Japanese as an exceptional people and considers Japan's cultural history the key to its economic success, has also been reinforced by foreign observers of Japan. Post-war foreign scholarly literature on Japan has focused on the country's 'unique' aspects, and works such as *Japan As Number One* (1979) have been incorporated into the *nihonjin-ron* discourse. Likewise, foreign commentary on Japan

like the mentioned 2011 issue of *Stern* also reinforces the Japanese narrative of uniqueness. Generally speaking, these contemporary discourses and ideologies are reinforced by media and politicians.

Another contradiction that Muslim immigrants may struggle with is that the public's expectation of cultural assimilation is not matched by "structural assimilation" on behalf of the government. Until the government actively incorporates immigrants into all social arenas, including the educational system and the labor market, one can hardly expect these new citizens to fully blend into society. Additionally, immigrants in Japan appear to be facing discrimination and prejudice because Japanese lack knowledge and understanding about immigration, minorities and other cultures, and this suggests the educational system needs to be improved.

7.6 Suggested policy changes for better accommodation of immigrants in Japan

As Japan continues to move towards increased labor migration and a growth in its immigrant population, this development puts pressure on politicians to change, discard and introduce a number of different policies to secure the smoothness of these societal changes. First, it puts pressure on them to undertake a number of preventive measures to lower the risk of discrimination against minorities. One possible measure to attain this goal would be to alter the educational system to actively prevent the spread of prejudices and misconceptions about immigration, minorities and foreign cultures, as well as offer thorough courses on such topics as globalization and intercultural relations. Another would be to launch attitude campaigns directed at all segments of the population. Next, it also exerts pressure on officials, including the government as well as the police, to avoid generating such misconceptions through the use of xenophobic or essentializing discourses in public relations.

Furthermore, I suggest the government should develop an honest and future-oriented unskilled labor migration program that differs from today's 'trainee' program. If Japan wishes to successfully build an egalitarian multiethnic society, this new program should arguably also grant today's underclass of 'illegal' immigrants, who tirelessly contribute to the economy through hard work in unpopular sectors, a legal status that would allow them to continue their indispensable work while feeling safe, free and protected by law. This new unskilled labor immigration program should instead of enforcing temporality to all rather provide a clear pathway towards legal 'long-term resident' status for those immigrants who become interested in settling down in Japan. If Japan while becoming increasingly dependent on a considerable numbers of new immigrants per year still

continues to provide the current trainee program as its only legal migration program, the country might very well experience that potential immigrants end up choosing other immigrant accepting countries, not bothering to enter a country where their working conditions are likely to be quite unsatisfactory, and where one has to learn a unique and challenging new language only to be forced home after a limited time period.

Among the three most realistic policy approaches that states may apply towards ethnic or cultural minorities; segregation, the ‘melting pot’ and multiculturalism; the latter appears best suited for Japan. ‘Segregation’, apart from being an ethically dubious strategy, is likely to cause significant radicalization and uproars among highly marginalized minority groups, while the strategy of the ‘melting pot’ seems unrealistic for a new emerging immigrant accepting society in the world of today, with the increase in trans-national identities, long-distance nationalism and further contemporary trends of fragmentation that modern technological advances have paved way for.

With that being said, Japan arguably should not expect complete cultural assimilation from members of new cultural groups introduced to society from this point on, but rather aim for a positive and peaceful co-existence of different cultural groups under some overarching values and norms for society. If the government actively seeks to incorporate immigrants into all social arenas, including the educational system, the labor market and more, these new citizens are likely to develop positive sentiments to their host society and become structurally assimilated. I will argue that rather than full cultural assimilation, surely these structural developments are the true prerequisites for a stable society without *masatsu*, “friction”, between different cultural groups. With this structure in place, immigrants would ideally be able to freely choose between cultural assimilation and other strategies of acculturation, like the ‘median’ option of integration.

Further elaborating on the aforementioned need for preventive measures against discrimination, I argue that individual members of different cultural minority groups should not only be protected by the introduction of a law against racial discrimination, but also be granted a number of individual-level “group-differentiated rights”, like accommodation in the educational system and public matters such as voting, by being offered information in multiple languages, or other assistance that takes their unique backgrounds into consideration. Furthermore, to prevent future generations of Japan-born immigrants from turning into a marginalized ‘underclass’ deprived of social capital, it might be necessary to make the Japanese public school system compulsory for all citizens regardless of nationality, and also to introduce policies for better accommodation of immigrant schoolchildren, including programs such as intensive language classes for Japanese as a foreign language. By drawing experience from cases such as Germany, Japan should with a limited

number of changes be able to rework its educational system to not only better include today's foreign population, but also to become much better prepared for the future. Further potential future-oriented changes to the educational system could include reworking officially recognized history textbooks to paint a less subjective and 'amnesiac' picture of modern Japanese history.

It is undesirable that politicians continue uttering populist criticism of immigration and foreigners while they arguably in reality know that Japan is dependent on foreign workers, and will only become increasingly dependent in years to come. In a political climate that encouraged and celebrated Japanese society's rich cultural and ethnic diversity, combined with an educational system that taught citizens lessons on foreign minorities' contributions to society from an early age on, unbalanced images and misconceptions of immigrants would surely decrease. Furthermore, the demand for and interest in dubious, exaggerative and misinforming representations of foreigners in TV shows, like *Mayobra-ha*, *Koko ga hen da yo Nihonjin* and *Karakuri TV*, would most likely decline.

In order for Japan's various cultural groups to live peacefully together in the future, in healthy relationships marked by mutual understanding and respect, it would arguably be fruitful to decrease the over-emphasis on foreigners' 'otherness' that we see much of in Japanese society today. This should indeed be possible as long as there is a political will to do so. In the Tokugawa Period, those in power explicitly alternated back and forth between policies of exaggerating or downplaying the 'otherness' of minorities, depending on shifting political goals. Politicians in post-war Japan have exaggerated the difference of 'others', and emphasized the 'sameness' of 'ethnic Japanese' for political goals such as increasing national unity in times of rapid development and social changes, as well as populist goals such as appealing to the public's nostalgia and cultural nationalism sentiments. However, it should from this point on gradually become in the interest of politicians to advocate increased immigration, as they surely will struggle more and more with combating *koureika* and *shoushika* and their various related societal problems, and will meet increasing pressure from interest parties such as Japanese business and industry.

As Japan's immigrant population grows, the government might want to take a number of measures to avoid an undesirable growth in the proportion of legal citizens unable to participate in the democratic process. First, if Japan wishes to continue special migration opportunities for ethnic 'returnees', it might be good to follow the policies of countries with similar programs, like Israel and Germany, and grant these new citizens Japanese nationality. In order to ensure that they will take advantage of this opportunity, Japan could follow recent developments in South Korea and open up the possibility for dual citizenship. Currently, hundreds of thousands of Japan-born

immigrant descendants of such nationalities as Korea and China are holding on to their foreign nationalities while leading their entire lives in Japan, and for many of them naturalization is undesirable since they do not wish to forfeit their original nationality. If Japan were to fully allow dual citizenship, that would potentially also cause an increase in the number of Japan-born foreign citizens attaining Japanese nationality, thus allowing them voting rights in their home country, strengthening Japan's democracy.

Either way, Japan will arguably always have a share of citizens who do not hold Japanese nationality. As this part of the population is likely to only increase from this point on, the central government should consider following the example of the prefectures who grant local voting rights to foreign citizens, and turn this into a consistent nation-wide policy.

The policies that initiated Japan's First Wave of immigration, namely the trainee system and the revised Immigration Law, were introduced in 1981 and 1990 respectively. Japan has further developed in the years that have gone by since this, and has had sufficient time to review these policies and their after-effects. While the leaders of post-war Japan have applied 'us'-strengthening concepts such as cultural nationalism in order to increase the legitimacy of the state, in the 21st century political climate of Japan several other possible approaches to build legitimacy exist, which should not have to conflict with the development of a more multiculturalism-oriented society. As China continues its economic rise, Japan could differentiate itself in the region by continuing to be a pioneer of democratic values like universal suffrage, multiparty rule, freedom of speech and equal opportunities for all citizens.

In order to continue securing these values in a multiculturalist framework, measures such the introduction of a law against racial discrimination would be desirable. Such political developments would surely secure Japan global acclaim, and allow the country to reconfirm itself as a successfully modernized pioneer of democracy in the region. This would legitimize the state in a way that arguably is much better suited for the 21st century than the discourses of 'racial homogeneity' and *nihonjin-ron* that have dominated post-war Japan. These discourses by this point appear to be obstacles to the development of future-oriented immigration policies, the lack of which is arguably holding the country back by hampering economic growth and social development.

Potential for future research

Exploring the situation of Muslims as an immigrant group in Japan should continue to produce interesting results. A full-fledged comparative study of the situation of Muslim immigrants in Japan and a Western European nation should be of high value to contemporary research on Muslims as an

immigrant group. Original comparative field research with Muslims immigrant respondents in both nations, as well as field research on the impression of Muslim immigrants among members of these nations' mainstream societies, could possibly shed light on new and yet to be discussed sides of the muslim immigrant discourse in both societies, and challenge the status quo of current research.

8. Bibliography

My thesis cites Japanese, German, Norwegian and English language publications. I have chosen to divide my bibliography by language, in order to provide a convenient overview for those who are interested in reading more but lack proficiency in either of the four languages.

English-language sources:

- Al Jazeera and agencies. *Japan's foreign minister resigns*. March 6, 2011, <http://bit.ly/lk9FBQ> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edition ed. London and New York: Verso, 1991.
- _____. *The Spectre of comparisons*. London and New York: Verso, 1998.
- Arudou, Debito. *A level playing field for immigrants*. The Japan Times Online, December 1, 2009, <http://bit.ly/5qycaA> (last accessed November 10, 2010).
- _____. *Beware of foreigners' leaflets in Ikuno-ku, Osaka*. Debito.org, July 1, 2007, <http://bit.ly/lyLsXT> (last accessed: May 10, 2011).
- Asahi Shimbun. *Anti-terrorism data leaked on Net*. Asahi Shinbun, November 2, 2010, <http://bit.ly/kthD2a> (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- Aydin, Cem. "Overcoming Eurocentrism? Japan's Islamic Studies during the Era of the Greater East Asia War (1937 - 45)". In *The Islamic Middle East and Japan*, edited by Renée Worringer. New Jersey: Markus Wiener Publishers.
- BBC News. *South Korean fined in first racial insult case*. BBC News, November 27, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8382087.stm> (last accessed February 7th, 2011).
- Bordieu, Pierre. In Rodney Dean Benson and Érik Neveu, *Bourdieu and the journalistic field*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005.
- Bose, Mihir. *Raj, secrets, revolution: a life of Subhas Chandra Bose*. Grice Chapman Publishing, 2004.
- CIA. *The World Factbook - Country Comparisons: Birth Rate*. CIA, 2011, <http://1.usa.gov/kdbqlr> (last accessed May 9, 2011)
- _____. *The World Factbook - Country Comparisons: Life expectancy at birth*. CIA, 2011, <http://1.usa.gov/mIBqtc> (last accessed: May 9, 2011)
- _____. *The World Factbook - Indonesia*. CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/id.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011)

- _____. *The World Factbook - Pakistan*. CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011)
- _____. *The World Factbook - Bangladesh*. CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011)
- _____. *The World Factbook - Iran*. CIA 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html> (last accessed: March 30, 2011)
- Clark, Gregory. *Personal History*. Gregory Clark, <http://www.gregoryclark.net/Gregcv.html> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
- _____. *Gregoryclark.net*, Gregory Clark, www.gregoryclark.net (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
- Creutz-Kämpfi, Karin and Holly, Peter. "The rhetoric of Europeanness". 2009, <http://bit.ly/iruANx> (last accessed: May 9, 2011)
- Cribb, Robert and Li, Narangoa (ed). *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945*. London & New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Dean, Meryll. *JAPAN: REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS*. Report commissioned by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Protection Information Section (DIP), February 2006, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/43f4a4b94.pdf> (last accessed: February 7, 2011).
- Demeny, Paul George and McNicoll, Geoffrey. *Encyclopedia of Population*. Macmillan Reference USA, 2003.
- Dikötter, Frank (ed). *The construction of racial identities in China and Japan: historical and contemporary perspectives*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997.
- Dua, R. P. *The impact of the Russo-Japanese (1905) war on Indian politics*. Dehli: S. Chand & Co., 1966.
- *Encyclopedia Britannica*. "Herbert Spencer". <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/559249/Herbert-Spencer> (last accessed: April 20, 2011)
- Farah, Caesar. *Islam: Beliefs and Observations*. 7th Revised edition edition, New York: Barron's Educational Series, 2003.
- Goodman, Roger. "Afterword: Marginals, minorities, majorities and migrants - studying the Japanese borderlands in contemporary Japan". In *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 325-333. London & New York: Routledge 2008.
- Faure, Guy and Schwab, Laurent. *Japan-Vietnam: a relation under influences*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008.
- Hotta, Eri. *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931 - 1945*. New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2007.
- Hylland Eriksen, Thomas. *Ethnicity And Nationalism*. Pluto Press, 1993, new print from 2002.

- Esenbel, Selçuk. “Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945”, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 4 (October 2004): 1140-1170. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3524067>.
- Fukada, Takahiro. *Selective Immigration for highly skilled urged*. The Japan Times Online, November 25, 2010. <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101125f1.html> (last accessed: February 25, 2011).
- Fukue, Natsuko. *Salarymen feeling pressure of elderly care*. The Japan Times Online, October 22, 2010, <http://bit.ly/kXPXOt> (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- _____. *Nonprofit brings together foreign, Japanese residents in Hamamatsu*. The Japan Times Online, March 13, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100313f1.html> (last accessed February 24, 2011).
- _____. *For most, adoption option impractical, iffy*. The Japan Times Online, September 8, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100908f2.html> (last accessed October 21st, 2010).
- Fukuoka, Yasunori. *Lives of Young Koreans in Japan*. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2000.
- Gabler, Jay. *Sociology for Dummies*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2010.
- Ganesan, N. *Myanmar: state, society and ethnicity*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007.
- Goodman, Roger and Harper, Sarah. *Japan in the New Global Demography: Comparative Perspectives*. JapanFocus, 2002-2011, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-S-Harper/2472> (last accessed September 21, 2010)
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996)
- Hur, Nam-lin. *Death and social order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, anti-Christianity, and the danka system*. Harvard: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007.
- The Immigration Bureau of Japan. *Revision of the Training and Technical Intern Training Programs*. The Immigration Bureau of Japan, 2009, http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/newimmiact/koumoku3_english.html (last accessed May 11, 2011).
- Inoguchi, Takashi. “Globalisation and cultural nationalism”. In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture*, edited by Yoshio Sugimoto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 337-339.
- Japanprobe. *Bobby Ologun profits by betting against Japanese tolerance for international marriages*. Japanprobe, August 15, 2009, <http://www.japanprobe.com/2009/08/15/bobby-ologun->

- [profits-by-betting-against-japanese-tolerance-for-international-marriages/](#) (last accessed May 10, 2011)
- Kamata, Satoshi. *Japan's Internship Training Program for Foreign Workers: Education or Exploitation?*. Japan Focus, 2008, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Kamata-Satoshi/2820> (last accessed: April 27, 2011)
 - Kawakami, Yasunori. *Local Mosques and the Lives of Muslims in Japan*. JapanFocus, 2007, <http://bit.ly/iEbCFS> (last accessed May 9, 2011)
 - Kibe, Takashi. "Immigration and Integration Policies in Japan: At the Crossroads of the Welfare State and the Labour Market". In *Migration and Integration - Japan in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Gabriele Vogt and Glenda S. Roberts, 58-71 (München: iudicium, 2011).
 - Komai, Hiroshi. *Migrant workers in Japan*. London and New York: Kegan Paul International 1995.
 - The Korean Ministry of Unification. *North Korean refugees reached 20,000*. The Korean Ministry of Unification, November 22, 2010, <http://bit.ly/fHGLSZ> (last accessed: April 14, 2011).
 - Kyodo News. *At North-linked schools, kids get brainwashed, Nakai asserts*. The Japan Times Online, April 27, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jjLGsi> (last accessed May 9, 2011)
 - _____. *Foreigners win ¥17 million for trainee abuses*. The Japan Times Online, January 30, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100130b2.html> (last accessed May 8, 2011).
 - _____. *Defense policy to outline more active stance*. The Japan Times Online, December 5, 2010, <http://bit.ly/iiocag> (last accessed: May 11, 2011)
 - _____. *Leaked antiterror info published*. The Japan Times Online, November 28, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jSgrkv> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).
 - _____. *Yearning for multiculturalism*. The Japan Times Online, December 10, 2010, <http://bit.ly/emuPgt> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
 - _____. *Suicide prompts major bullying study*. The Japan Times Online, November 11, 2010, <http://bit.ly/mpp49m> (last accessed May 10, 2011)
 - _____. *Number of crime cases involving foreign suspects down in '06: NPA*. The Japan Times Online, February 9, 2007, <http://bit.ly/hTNSPv> (last accessed May 10, 2011).
 - Lee, Tae-hoon. *Dual Citizenship to be Allowed*. Korea Times Online, April 21, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jmDxUJ> (last accessed May 9, 2011)
 - Lupton, Deborah. "Discourse analysis: a new methodology for understanding the ideologies of health and illness". *Australian Journal of Public Health*, Volume 16, Issue 2 (June 1992), 145–150, <http://bit.ly/mIxFJX> (last accessed: May 9, 2011)

- Mainichi Japan. *Japan and Denmark: Two very different approaches to social welfare*. The Mainichi Daily News, December 1, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jP0Ze2> (last accessed May 9, 2011)
- _____. *Leaked terror investigation documents contained info on people helping police probes*. The Mainichi Daily News, November 1, 2010, <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101101p2a00m0na016000c.html> (last accessed November 15, 2010).
- _____. *Muslims file suit against publisher over book on leaked police anti-terrorism documents*. The Mainichi Daily News, December 25, 2010, <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101225p2a00m0na005000c.html> (last accessed January 19, 2011).
- Marcure, Kenneth A. "The *Danka* System", *Monumenta Nipponica*, Volume 40 (1985).
- Martellone, Anna Maria. "National Unity, Assimilation and Ethnic Diversity in the United States". In Valeria Gennaro Lerda (ed), *From 'Melting Pot' to Multiculturalism. The Evolution of Ethnic Relations in the United States and Canada*. Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1990.
- Martin, Alex and Matsutani, Minoru. *Islamic community lays down roots*. Japan Times, November 14, 2010, <http://bit.ly/jamj0j> (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- Martin, Alex. *Foreigner suffrage opponents rally*. The Japan Times Online, April 18, 2010, <http://bit.ly/mQjPBX> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
- Matsubara, Hiroshi. *Economic gloom just adds to illegal workers' plight*. The Japan Times Online, June 27, 2002, <http://bit.ly/ggftpd> (last accessed March 23, 2011)
- McCormack, Gavan et al. *Multicultural Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- McCurry, Justin. *Blue eyes, blond hair: that's US problem, says Japanese minister*. The Guardian Online, March 23, 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2007/mar/23/japan.usa> (last accessed April 27, 2011).
- McNeill, David. *Muslims in shock over police 'terror' leak*. The Japan Times Online, November 9, 2010, <http://bit.ly/iRWdvW> (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- Ministry of Justice. *Recovery of public safety*. MOJ, 2010, <http://www.moj.go.jp/ENGLISH/issues/issues04.html> (last accessed: April 16, 2011).
- _____. *Basic Plan for Immigration Control - Fourth Edition*. March 2010, http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/seisaku/keikaku_101006_english.pdf (last accessed November 10th, 2010).
- Minority Rights Group International. *World Directory of Minorities: Japan Overview*. Minority Rights Group International, June 2008, <http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=5358&tmpl=printpage> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).
- Moreda, Takashi. *Tracking Down Tempura*. The World of Kikkoman, 2011, <http://bit.ly/7oxTVk> (last accessed May 10, 2011)

- Morris-Suzuki, Tessa. *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007.
- _____. *Invisible Immigrants: Undocumented Migration and Border Controls in Early Post-War Japan*. JapanFocus, 2006, http://www.japanfocus.org/-Tessa-Morris_Suzuki/2210 (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- _____, *Re-Inventing Japan*. London & New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998.
- Murphy-Shigematsu, Stephen. "The invisible man". In *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 282-304. London & New York: Routledge 2008.
- Nagata, Kazuaki. *Foreigners rally over job security*. The Japan Times Online, February 24, 2011, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100308a2.html> (last accessed May 11, 2011).
- Nambu Foreign Workers Caucus. *About Nambu FWC*. Nambu Foreign Workers Caucus, 2010, <http://nambufwc.org/about/> (last accessed May 10, 2011)
- National Diet Library. *The constitution of the Empire of Japan*. <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c02.htm> (last accessed April 15 2011).
- Nippon Keidanren. *Japan 2025: Envisioning a Vibrant, Attractive Nation in the 21st Century*. Nippon Keidanren, 2003, <http://bit.ly/ks2002> (last accessed: May 9, 2011)
- _____. *Recommendations on Accepting Non-Japanese Workers*. 2004, <http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/2004/029.html> (last accessed: March 9, 2011)
- _____. *Second Set of Recommendations on Accepting Non-Japanese Workers*. Nippon Keidanren, 2007, <http://www.keidanren.or.jp/english/policy/2007/017.html> (last accessed: March 9, 2011).
- Nishikawa, Nagao. "Two Interpretations of Japanese Culture". In *Multicultural Japan*, edited by Gavan McCormack et al, 245-264. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Okano, Kaori. *Third-Generation Koreans' Entry into the Workforce in Japan*. La Troupe University, January 8, 2008, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1525/aeq.1997.28.4.524/pdf> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).
- Onishi, Akiko. "Becoming a better muslim". In *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 217-235 (London & New York: Routledge 2008).
- Pedraza, Silvia. "Assimilation or Transnationalism? Conceptual Models of the Immigrant Experience in America". In Ramaswami Mahalingam (ed), *Cultural Psychology of Immigrants* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006).

- Pettigrew, Thomas F. "Two-Level Approach to Anti-Immigration Prejudice". In Ramaswami Mahalingam (ed), *Cultural Psychology of Immigrants* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006).
- Population Reference Bureau. *2010 World Population Sheet*. Population Reference Bureau, published July 28, 2010, <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2010/2010wpds.aspx> (last accessed October 29, 2010)
- Penn, Michael. "Islam in Japan: Adversity and Diversity". *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 1 (Winter 2006).
- _____. "Public Faces and Private Spaces: Islam in the Japanese Context". In "Roundtable. Islam in Japan: A Cause for Concern?" *Asia Policy*, Number 5 (January 2008) 61-104, <http://bit.ly/jY52OM> (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- Powers, Penny. *The methodology of discourse analysis*. New York: Jones & Bartlett Pub, 2001.
- Prato, Giuliana B. "Introduction - Beyond Multiculturalism: Anthropology at the Intersection Between the Local, the National and the Global". In *Beyond Multiculturalism*, edited by Giuliana B. Prato, 1-19. Farnham: Ashgate 2009.
- Raymo, James M., Iwasawa, Miho and Bumpass, Larry. "Cohabitation and Family Formation in Japan". *Demography*, Volume 46, Number 4, (November 2009), 785-803, <http://bit.ly/f2mHyi>.
- Reader, Ian. *Religion in Contemporary Japan*. Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1991.
- Reed, Christopher. *Ghosts of Wartime Japan Haunt Koizumi's Cabinet*. New American Media, November 3, 2005, <http://bit.ly/krMla1> (last accessed May 10, 2011).
- Roberts, Glenda S. and Douglass, Michael (ed). *Japan and Global Migration: Foreign Workers and the Advent of a Multicultural Society*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003.
- Roberts, Glenda S. "Immigration policy". In *The Demographic Challenge: A Handbook about Japan*, edited by Florian Coulmas et al, 765-779. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2008.
- Ryang, Sonya. *North Koreans In Japan: Language, Ideology, And Identity*. Westview Press: 1997.
- _____. *Japan and National Anthropology: A critique*. New York & London: Routledge, 2004.
- Sakanaka, Hidenori. *The Future of Japan's Immigration Policy: a battle diary*. JapanFocus, 2002-2011, <http://bit.ly/g27C5m> (last accessed: April 22, 2011).
- Sakurai, Keiko. "Muslims in Contemporary Japan". In "Roundtable. Islam in Japan: A Cause for Concern?", *Asia Policy*, Number 5 (January 2008) 61-104, <http://bit.ly/jY52OM> (last accessed May 9, 2011)
- Sam, David L. and Berry, John W. (ed). *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

- Shipper, Apichai W. *Fighting for Foreigners*. Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Siddle, Richard. *Race, Resistance and the Ainu of Japan*. London & New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Spickard, Paul. *Race and Nation: Ethnic Systems in the Modern World*. New York & London: Routledge, 2004.
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. *Multiculturalism*. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2010, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/multiculturalism/> (last accessed: May 9, 2011)
- Stegewerns, Dick. *Adjusting to the New World: Japanese Opinion Leaders of the Taishō Generation and the Outside World, 1918-1932*. (Doctoral thesis: Faculty of Arts, Leiden University, 2007) <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/1887/12151/1/Thesis.pdf> (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
- _____. "The Japanese 'Civilization Critics' and the National Identity of Their Asian Neighbours, 1918-1932: The Case of Yoshino Sakuzō. In *Imperial Japan and National Identities in Asia, 1895-1945*, edited by Robert Cribb and Narangoa Li, 107-128. London & New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Smith Tang, John. *Establishing an anti-discrimination law in an Asian country*. Aliran, 2009, <http://aliran.com/1102.html> (last accessed: April 14, 2011).
- Toby, Ronald. "The 'Indianness' of Iberia and Changing Japanese Iconographies of Other". In *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting and Reflecting on Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, edited by S. B. Schwartz, 323-351. Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- United Nations. *New Report on Replacement Migration Issued by UN Population Division*. United Nations Press Release, March 17, 2000, <http://bit.ly/iXowdP> (last accessed May 9, 2011).
- Vogt, Gabriele and Roberts, Glenda S. *Migration and Integration - Japan in Comparative Perspective*. München: iudicium, 2011.
- Ward, Rowena. *Left Behind: Japan's Wartime Defeat and the Stranded Women of Manchukuo*. JapanFocus, 2007, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Rowena-Ward/2374> (last accessed May 10, 2011).
- Weiner, Michael (ed.): *Japan's minorities: the illusion of homogeneity* (New York & London: Routledge, 2000)
- Willis, David Blake and Murphy-Shigematsu, Stephen. "Ethnoscapes and the other". In *Transcultural Japan*, edited by David Blake Willis and Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, 305-324. London & New York: Routledge 2008.

- Wodak, Ruth. “Introducing CDA and the Discourse-Historical Approach – Media in Times of Political Crisis”. Lecture on November 30, 2009, Lancaster University, <http://bit.ly/hi5uxQ> (last accessed: April 20, 2011)
- Yoon, In-Jin. “The Korean Diaspora from Global Perspectives”. *Japanese Studies Around the World*, Volume 12 (2006), Chapter 1.

Japanese-language sources:

- Chibatopi. *Zairyu Mitomerarezu Tōgane no Iran-jin Ikka 'Nihon de Kurashitai'*. March 27, 2009, Chibatopi, <http://bit.ly/xw0L4> (last accessed: March 4, 2011).
- Ishida, Takuo. *Tō-a Dōbun Shoin: Tō-a Dōbunkai Kankō Zasshi Kiji Dēta Bēsu*. Aichi University, Published March 2008 and revised October 2008, http://toadb.aichi-u.ac.jp/DB_Kaidai.pdf (last accessed: May 9, 2011).
- Japan Immigration Association. *Zairyu Gaikokujin Tokei - Statistics on the foreigners registered in Japan*. Tokyo, 2010.
- Makino, Shinya. *Naze Isuraamu wa Nihonjin ni rikai shinikui ka*, Isurāmu Bunka no Hōmupēji (Homepage of Islamic Culture), <http://www2.dokidoki.ne.jp/racket/rikai.html> (last accessed: April 15 2011).
- Ministry of Justice. *Heisei 21 nenmatsu genzai ni okeru gaikokujin tōrokusha tokei ni tsuite*. Ministry of Justice, published July 6, 2010 (report for 2009), retrieved from http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri04_00005.html (last accessed September 23, 2010).
- _____. *Kokuseki (Shusshinchi) Betsu Danjo Betsu Fuhō-zairyusha kazu no sui-i*. Ministry of Justice, 2011. <http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000072624.pdf> (last accessed: April 9, 2011).
- _____. E-mail correspondence with the Ministry of Justice.
- Murakami, Teisuke. *Ezo seikei zusesu*. 1990 reproduction of original work from 1823. Sapporo: Hokkaidō Shuppan Kikaku Sentā 1990.
- Sakurai, Keiko. *Nihon no Musurimu Shakai*. Tokyo: Chikuma Shinsho, 2003.
- Sanchanta, Mariko. *Maehara Gaishō wo Jinin ni oikonda niman-en no kenkin*. Japan Real Time, The Wall Street Journal. March 7, 2011, <http://on.wsj.com/eH5wkY> (last accessed: March 7, 2011).
- Sugita, Hideaki. *Nihonjin no chūtōhakken*. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995.
- Tokyo Broadcasting System. *Ikebukuro West Gate Park*. Episode 4, 2000.

- Yanagisawa, Yukio. *Nihonjin wa hontō ni 'Sekai no kiwaremono' na no ka?*. Tokyo, Shinchosha, 2009.
- Yomiuri Telecasting Corporation. *Mayobra-ha*. 2008 episode uploaded on YouTube, <http://bit.ly/gcbHKO> (last accessed May 11, 2011).

German-language sources:

- Berlin-Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung. *Demos*. Issue 44, November 6, 2007, <http://bit.ly/ftO9RG> (last accessed April 14, 2011).
- Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research). *Apropos Sprachförderung*. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, April 28, 2006, <http://bit.ly/fHjFB3> (last accessed: May 10, 2011).
- Exner, Ulrich. *CDU dankt Türken dafür, dass sie geblieben sind*. Welt Online, March 29, 2011, <http://bit.ly/gSLB4j> (last accessed April 15, 2011).
- Gogolin, Ingrid et al. *Förderung von Kindern und Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund (Gutachten)*. European Medi@Culture-Online, 2003, <http://bit.ly/hcQEV1> (last accessed: April 15 2011).
- Meedia. *TOP 100 Zeitschriften*. Meedia, <http://meedia.de/print/top-100-zeitschriften.html> (last accessed: April 9, 2011).
- *Stern*. Volume 13, 2011, cover page.
- Stern. *Stern - Das Magazin: Das Unglaubliche Volk*, Stern.de, 2011, <http://www.stern.de/magazin/heft/stern-nr-13-24032011-das-unglaubliche-volk-1666460.html> (last accessed: May 11, 2011).
- Sütterlin, Sabine. *Als Ausländer ist man in Japan nur Gast*. Berlin-Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung, <http://bit.ly/ibyJcP> (last accessed April 14, 2011).
- Vogt, Gabriele. *Bevölkerungsentwicklung in Japan: Fokus Migration*. Berlin-Institut für Bevölkerung und Entwicklung, October 2008, <http://bit.ly/euyFyF> (last accessed May 9, 2011).

Norwegian-language sources:

- Bruaset, Marit. "Nasjonalisme i etterkrigstidens Japan". In *Vinduer mot Japan*, edited by Terje Grønning (Trondheim: Tapir Akademisk Forlag, 2005).
- Harden, Blaine. "Japanerne vil ha flere barn". Norwegian translation published in *Aftenposten*, April 26, 2009. Originally from *The Washington Post*, Tokyo.
- Klausen, Arne Martin. *Kultur - variasjon og sammenheng*. Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1970).